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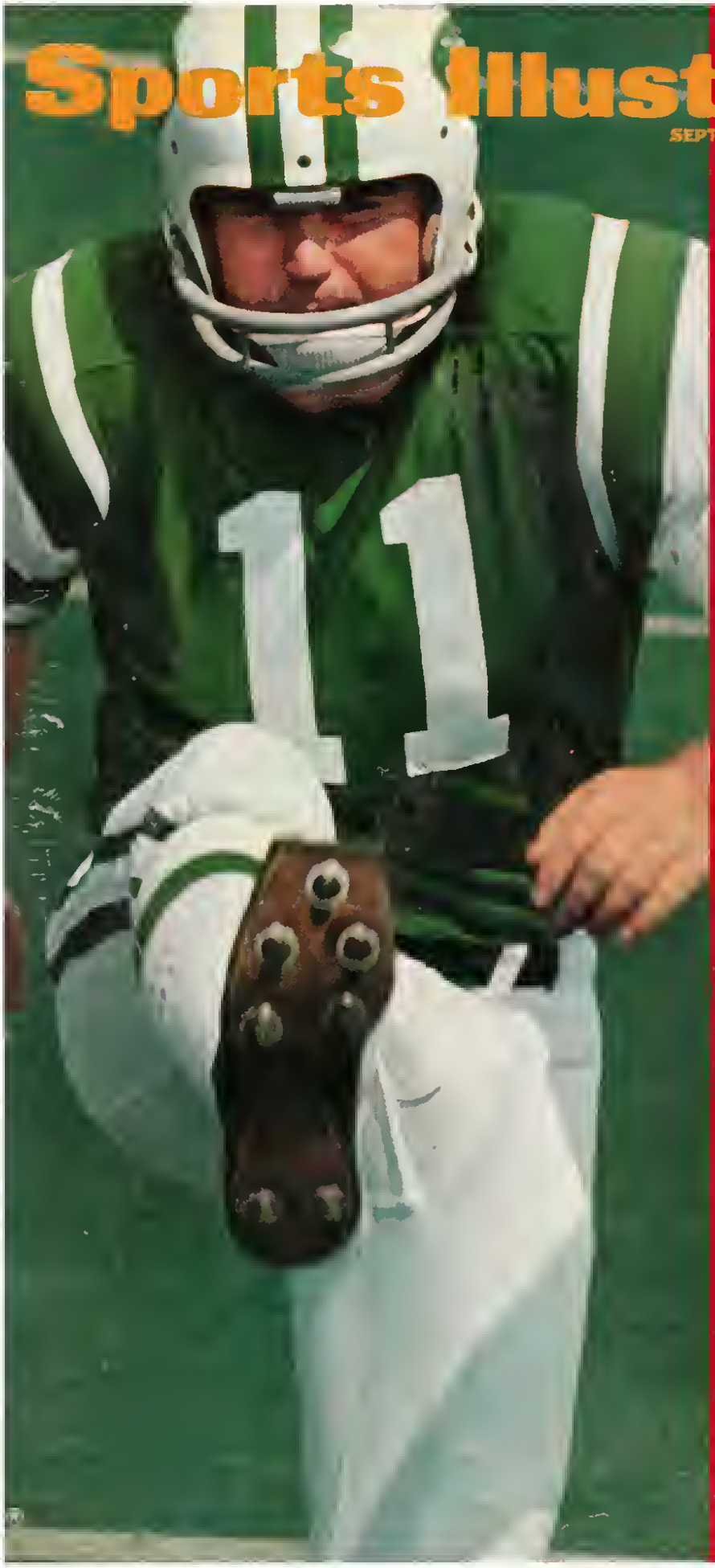
SEPTEMBER 22, 1969 50 CENTS



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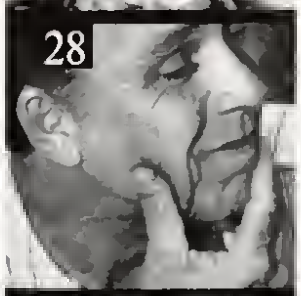

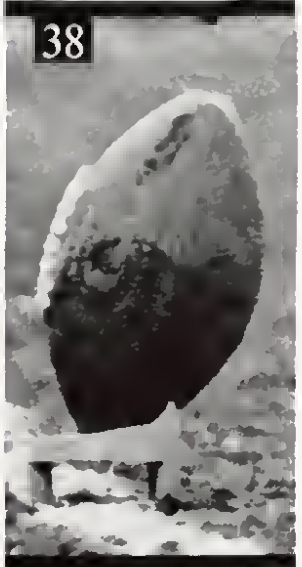

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Next week

THE NFL KICKS OFF with a showdown between the champion Colts and their archrivals, the Rams. Tex Maule reports on how a hale Johnny U fares against the Foursome.

A CHICAGO INSTITUTION sweet-talking Ernie Banks has been rattling out hits and good humor for so long, Mark Kram writes, that people forget that underneath lies quite a man.

ALLIGATORS won't be seeing anybody later unless strict control of hide sales comes soon. Martin Kane goes to Florida for a look at the beasts and some thoughts on their future.

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There is a cigarette for the two of you. L&M.

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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

For a long time SPORTS ILLUSTRATED has been making predictions on games, pennant races, tournaments, playoffs and such, a precarious and—fortunately—often successful exercise that has our writers and editors out on a limb in public view while the loyal readers sharpen their saws. Professional football results are among the most difficult to forecast, as any bookie can tell you, and our resident pro football prophet, Tex Maule, has had his share of triumph and tragedy. He prefers to brag a little first. "From 1960 to last year I had a pretty good record," he says. "I picked the Eagles to beat Green Bay in 1960, I tabbed the Packers the three years they won the NFL and in the first Super Bowl I darned near picked the score. Of course, last season I picked Dallas and fell flat on my face. The Jets beating the Colts didn't help my average either."

Maule got quite a few reminders of his fallibility from Jet fans, but his lowest moment in the predicting business actually came in college football. Oklahoma had a streak of 47 straight victories in the mid-1950s and he wrote a piece on why the Sooners were unbeatable. The following weekend Notre Dame beat them 7–0 at Norman and Irish Coach Terry Brennan got on the plane waving a copy of SI.

Immune to horselaughs, Tex is at it again in this issue. As part of our annual pro football package starting on page 38, he picks the winners of the six AFL and NFL divisions. He is waiting until the end of the regular season before selecting the league and Super Bowl winners because "there are too many playoffs now, too many imponderables." Along with Maule's picks, we offer an assortment of wild Arnold Roth illustrations; they are followed by 12 pages of scouting reports, a portfolio of color photographs on "the kicking boom" and a funny-agonizing account of the old New York Titans (now the Jets).

This week's cover and portfolio are the work of Photographer Neil Leifer, who shoots a great deal of football for us as well as many other sports. (Last year Leifer took a short leave to make a series of photographs of the recommissioned battleship *New Jersey*, which shortly will appear in book form under the title *Dreadnaught Returns*.) Getting his kicking pictures was not easy. In Miami, for instance, he had just finished attaching cameras to each goalpost when a downpour started, "exactly what I didn't need with remote cameras. Plus I was trying to shoot extra points and there were only two the whole game."

The Turner article, our lead story on Race Driver Jackie Stewart—and a fair portion of the scouting reports—were written by Robert Jones, who will share the pro football beat with Tex this season. Jones is an old Green Bay fan from Milwaukee who grew up listening to broadcasts of Packer games. He suffered through the long drought between Don Hutson's departure and Vince Lombardi's arrival.

Morton Sharnik, who has looked over many football camps for this and past issues, has an even closer relationship with the game. When he got out of Marietta College, where he was a running back, he was offered a pro tryout. He decided instead to go into the service and then to law school before coming to journalism, but he never lost touch with football. He once sat around for hours talking plays, personnel, etc. with Harry Gilmer, at that time an assistant with St. Louis. Finally Gilmer asked, "Where are you coaching now, Coach?"

Gary Valk

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BOOKTALK

The mysteries of baseball and tennis are explored in new informal histories

Both Douglass Wallop's *Baseball: An Informal History* (W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York City, $5.95) and Malcolm D. Whitman's *Tennis: Origins and Mysteries* (Singing Tree Press, Detroit, $10) fall into the category of literary detection: the pursuit of elusive historical fact, including the oddities that turn up in attics and archives. Whitman's book examines certain little flukes of history. James I of Scotland, for instance, owed his death indirectly to tennis. In trying to escape his assassins, the king remembered too late that he had caused his escape route through a wall in a vault of the palace to be blocked off to keep his tennis balls from going through. More than a century before that, another monarch, King Louis X of France, is supposed to have died of a chill after playing tennis in a wood in Vincennes.

Less macabre but no less fluky are some of the incidents in Wallop's baseball history. Wallop is the author of the novel *The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant*, which was converted into the Broadway musical, later a film, *Damn Yankees*. He tells the story of professional baseball's first 100 years. It is a story to attract a novelist: often glorious, sometimes funny and with a rich supply of heroes and villains. There was hero Harry Wright, the first to organize a professional team in 1869, a man whose toughest reprimand to his players was likely to be "you need a little ginger." There was the tragicomic Chris von der Ahe, a German immigrant who bought the St. Louis Browns and fractured fans with, "Ve lick der stuffings out of every team." There were villains galore in the roughnecks, gamblers and alcoholics who often ran the early games. And, of course, there was superhero Alexander Cartwright, the true inventor of baseball (SI, April 14), who established "the distance between bases at precisely 90 feet, a distance which has never changed in all the years since. . . . When, for example, a base runner sets out from first base to steal second, it is almost invariably a nip-and-tuck affair, so admirably is the distance between bases correlated to the limits of human speed and the power of the throwing arm. Had the distance been, say, 92 feet, stealing second would have been so difficult as to be seldom achieved. Had it been 88, stealing second might have been too easy."

Wallop is also fascinated by the "numerology" of baseball, "its absorption with the number three and its multiples thereof. Three strikes. Three outs. Three bases. Nine players. Ultimately nine innings. Three men in the outfield. Six in the infield, and of course, 90 feet between bases. . . . Baseball magnates," concludes the author, "so far as one knows, have made nothing of this aspect of triplicity. Although they have not hesitated to identify their game with patria, they have so far resisted, at least in public, any temptation to say that it has the solid backing of the Trinity."

Tennis, of course, has always been (or has been thought to be) more staid than baseball, and Whitman's approach to his book *Tennis: Origins and Mysteries* is as earnest—and sometimes as interesting—as a competition at Wimbledon. If baseball is hung up on the mystique of number three, tennis is as wholly involved with the number 15, and Whitman, for years the American champion as well as an undefeated Davis Cup player, whose book was first published in 1932 in a limited edition, examines all theories extant, only to conclude that tennis' scoring system is still, and probably always will be, a mystery. He is much more confident in offering what is surely a plausible origin of the word "love" to signify "nothing." Dismissing the theory that it comes from a Scotch word *luff* or from the French word for egg *l'oeuf*, he suggests that it is a concept as old as the English language itself. As far back as 971 "we find the equivalent of the expression 'neither for love nor money'" which eventually gave way to "'to play for love,' meaning 'to play for nothing' as contrasted with playing for money."

"It is quite usual to say, 'Let's play for love,' when we mean to play for nothing, and in view of the antiquity of this expression it would seem most natural for the English to have used the word to indicate no score when they first began to play the game." Right or wrong, the author worries and tracks down theories with the fervor of a bloodhound. Whitman is at his best, at least for pure doggedness, in a chapter called "The Catgut Mystery." Cat lovers everywhere will be relieved to learn that, where tennis is concerned, the cat's gut has been and always will be inviolate. "Catgut," writes the author earnestly and unequivocally, "whether used in tennis, in surgery, or in music, is made from the intestines of sheep." Moreover, "it takes parts of 50 or more sheep to string one racquet of the best quality. . . . In tracing the musical references the origin of the name was found. Catgut was originally called 'kitgut.' Kit was the old name for a small violin, and catgut meant at first 'violin string' or 'fiddle string.'" And that would seem to straighten the matter out once and for all, leaving the author free for such matters as the mystery of the double service, the origins of the let, the net, the ball, the racket and of course the origins of the game itself. For tennis buffs who wish to pursue the subject, there is a 79-page bibliography contributed by Robert W. Henderson.

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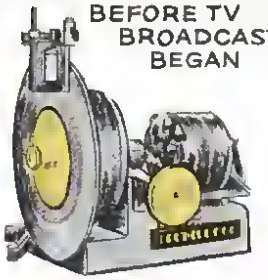

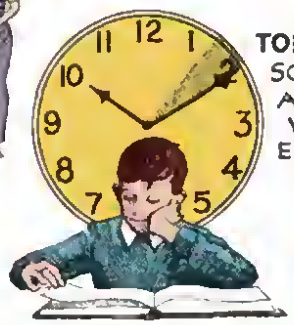

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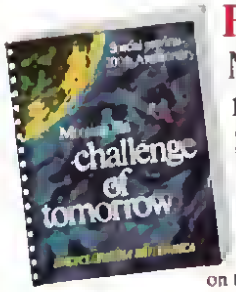

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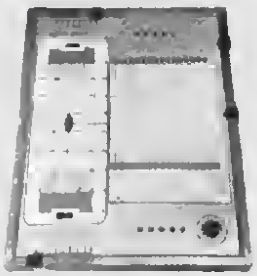

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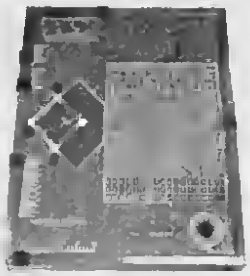

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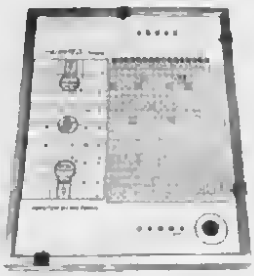

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SCORECARD

CARPETBAGGERS

The New York Mets' rise to first place in the National League's Eastern Division was, well, amazing, but it gave predictable birth to a flood of God-awful hokum in the press and on radio and TV, particularly in supposedly sophisticated New York. The day-in-and-day-out Met fans, who have thoroughly enjoyed this season since that first stunning 11-game win streak last May and June, were joined in September by the politicians (New York City has three mayoral candidates, all terribly interested in baseball right now, though none seems to give the tiniest damn for the other team in New York—and won't until the Yankees start winning). Worse, the editorial pundits weighed in, with the most grievous offenses being committed by the *New York Post* and *The New York Times*. The *Post* ran—stand back now—a *poem* on the Mets as an editorial (an unbelievably coy parody of Milton's *Paradise Lost*). The *Times* trotted out its senior political deep-thinker, James Reston, who can't seem to forget that 35 years ago he was publicity man with the Cincinnati Reds for a few months. Reston tediously cranked out 800 words of pseudophilosophic banality about sports and politics (sports are more fun, he decided).

Really, gentlemen, it's only a game. Relax and enjoy it.

SULKY REBUTTAL

Harness racing officials in Illinois disagree sharply with Mrs. Marje Lindheimer Everett's statement (SI, Sept. 15) that night Thoroughbred racing would not hurt night harness racing because the sports have two different followings. The harness people say the betting handle at harness tracks in the Chicago area had been up from 1.32% to 10.30% until Arlington Park's eight-night experiment with flat racing earlier this month. Then, in direct competition with the Thoroughbreds, the harness track handle dropped 9.67%. While this was going on, the harness people pointed out with grim satisfaction, night racing did not help the Arlington handle, either. Two earlier daytime meetings at Arlington and Washington Park had been down 8.8% and 9.2% from 1968; the night meeting was down 8.95%.

NEW BREW

Dr. Robert Cade, the not-so-mad scientist who gave the world Gatorade (SI, July 1, 1968), may have done it again. This week in Tampa he introduced Hop'n Gator, which is not a new battery-operated toy but an elixir brewed by the Pittsburgh Brewing Company. Indeed, Hop'n Gator looks like beer—but it doesn't taste like beer. It has this sort of champagne-type flavor and, like Gatorade, extra added attractions. Hop'n Gator is less filling than beer, can be served over the rocks, can not be detected on the breath and, reputedly, produces no hangover. So what has all this to do with sport? Aha! According to Wilton R. Miller, Dr. Cade's genial attorney, "When you drink this stuff you don't get alcohol fatigue. You can drink Hop'n Gator and continue to play tennis or golf without physical impairment. Of course, your judgment may be a little off."

ICE AGE

Hockey is off on another expansion kick. Vancouver and either Buffalo or Baltimore will join the National Hockey League next year in time for the 1970-71 season. The NHL's first bold six-team expansion three years ago made excellent sense; it broke hockey out of its Canadian-Northern U.S. regionalism and made it a major sport from coast to coast. But this new move has the odor of quick-buck expediency. By charging a $6 million entry fee (when the league first expanded, the new-member fees were only $2 million), each of the 12 existing NHL clubs picks up a sweet $1 million.

While any expansion would pose realignment problems, the NHL's present plan could scarcely be more awkward. The two new clubs will join the East where, barring miracles, they will be hopelessly outclassed for years, and the Chicago Black Hawks will shift to the West, a division Bobby Hull and his teammates are a good bet to dominate, although at the moment player discontent has damaged the Hawks' morale.

One praiseworthy thing coming out of the move is the NHL's plan to revise the Stanley Cup playoffs so that once again two strong teams will meet in the Cup finals. In 1971, semifinals will be played *across* division lines, instead of within them, thus doing away with the prospect of a weak West champion being humiliated every year by a powerful East club, as happened last spring in Montreal's slaughter of St. Louis.

CALL ME SPUD PALMER

In the wake of Arnold Palmer's momentary (it is hoped) retirement from the golfing wars has come an armada of suggestions from concerned admirers, recommending sure cures for his ailing

hip. "One letter suggested I drink a bottle of Squirt every day," Palmer said. "That was it. Just one bottle of Squirt daily." Since one of Palmer's many commercial affiliations is with Coca-Cola, he passed up the Squirt. Besides, he had plenty of other cures to try, if he wanted. One lady told him that she got over bursitis by taking a cod-liver oil capsule each day. She thinks it lubricated her joints. A Pennsylvania woman phoned to recommend one-fourth of a teaspoon of Sal Hepatica before each

continued

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meal and at bedtime. She emphasized that she was a medical technician and not a nut and that she herself had obtained complete relief from bursitis in both shoulders and hips with the treatment. A man from Oregon said the bursitis pain in his shoulders eased off when he began eating grapefruit each morning, but he said he didn't know if grapefruit worked for hips.

Palmer's favorite suggestion was first recommended to him in 1966, when he began to have his hip trouble. A man wrote and said he had cured his bursitis by carrying a potato in his pocket. Palmer politely thanked him at the time, said his hip was feeling better but that he would keep the remedy in mind in case the trouble recurred. After it did recur and Palmer had to withdraw from the PGA tournament, the man wrote again, resuggesting the potato treatment. He admitted that it "isn't a quick cure and might not work for you. You would know it in a couple of weeks. But, if the potato does calcify, you might use about four or five of them by the end of the year and you might just possibly be ready for the Masters next year."

NEEDLE

Still having trouble at your course with golfers who dawdle over every shot? You might take a tip from the Wollaston Golf Club near Boston, which has a sign at the first tee that reads: SLOW PLAY UNNECESSARY. ONLY LAST FOUR HOLES TELEVISED.

OUT OF THEIR LEAGUE

Motorcycle fans at Ascot Park in Los Angeles were treated to a race the other night that definitely was not listed in their programs. The entrants were two ambulances, the ones that are always at the ready in front of the grandstand. (Two are kept on hand so that one will be available when the other is off on its way to the hospital.)

"The drivers must have been bored," said a spectator. "There hadn't been a crash on the track for quite a while." In any case, when a cycle finally did spill, *both* ambulances roared into action and sped around the track. Their race ended in a tie, sort of, when one smacked into the side of the other, causing a couple of hundred dollars worth of damage.

The slightly injured motorcycle driver waited patiently as things were straight-

ched out and then was tooled off to the hospital in a slightly damaged and—one hopes—contrite vehicle of mercy.

OBLATE SPHEROID OODS

From Jimmy the Greek in Las Vegas comes the following odds on the pro football season

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

CAPITOL DIVISION		COASTAL DIVISION	
Dallas	1-4	Baltimore	Even
Washington	4-1	Los Angeles	3-1
Philadelphia	15-1	San Francisco	3-1
New Orleans	25-1	Atlanta	50-1
CENTURY DIVISION		**CENTRAL DIVISION**	
St Louis	8-5	Minnesota	3-2
Cleveland	2-1	Green Bay	2-1
New York	2½-1	Chicago	3-1
Pittsburgh	10-1	Detroit	5-1

DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS*
Dallas by 10 over St Louis
Minnesota by one over Baltimore

CHAMPIONSHIP.
Dallas by 3 over Minnesota

AMERICAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

EASTERN DIVISION		WESTERN DIVISION	
New York	1-2	Oakland	6-5
Houston	2-1	Kansas City	8-5
Buffalo	15-1	San Diego	4-1
Boston	25-1	Cincinnati	50-1
Miami	25-1	Denver	50-1

SEMIFINAL PLAYOFFS
New York by 7 over Kansas City
Oakland by 14 over Houston

CHAMPIONSHIP·
Oakland by 3 over New York

SUPER BOWL·
Dallas by 11 over Oakland

LEGIT

Nevada, the gambling state, is really unique Last week Governor Paul Laxalt appointed Sammy Cohen, a bookmaker from Las Vegas, to the State Racing Commission

Well, why not? Bookmaking is a legal occupation in Nevada, and who knows more about racing from a bettor's point of view than a bookie? Besides, Cohen has announced that none of the Las Vegas books will handle betting at the new local track when it opens next year

ELI EXPO

Ken MacKenzie, Yale's baseball coach, was a major league pitcher for 661 days from 1960 through 1965, which left him

continued

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Our stereo radio looks like tomorrow
This magnificent FM AM–FM Stereo radio is finished in rich Danish-style walnut to go with any decorator scheme. Its speakers give you 20 feet of stereo separation. And the stereo sound is so full and enveloping, you can get lost in it.

This one makes "short waves" Our Spellbinder 3-band portable plays regular FM or AM—plus thrilling shortwave. Its soft vinyl padding gives it the look and feel of leather. Operates on rechargeable nickel-cadmium batteries or on AC current.

The Diary stands at attention Here's an FM/AM clock radio with a high-rise effect. It takes up a 4½-inch square so it fits where most other radios just can't. The walnut graining is easy on the eyes, too. Clock is luminous and wakes you to music or alarm.

See these beauties and the rest of the line at your RCA dealer. He has many models to choose from—table models, portables, clock radios, you name it. One thing's sure. They're all good lookers as well as good listeners.

RCA

27 days short of the four years (baseball's years are shorter than ordinary years) he needed to be eligible to collect from the baseball players' pension fund. So this summer, after dismissing his Eli charges for the season, the 35-year-old MacKenzie, a Yale graduate himself, sat down and wrote letters to the five major league teams he had played with (Braves, Mets, Giants, Astros and Cardinals) and explained his plight. He also wrote to John McHale, president of the Montreal Expos. "He was with the Braves when I was with them," explains MacKenzie, "and I knew him pretty well."

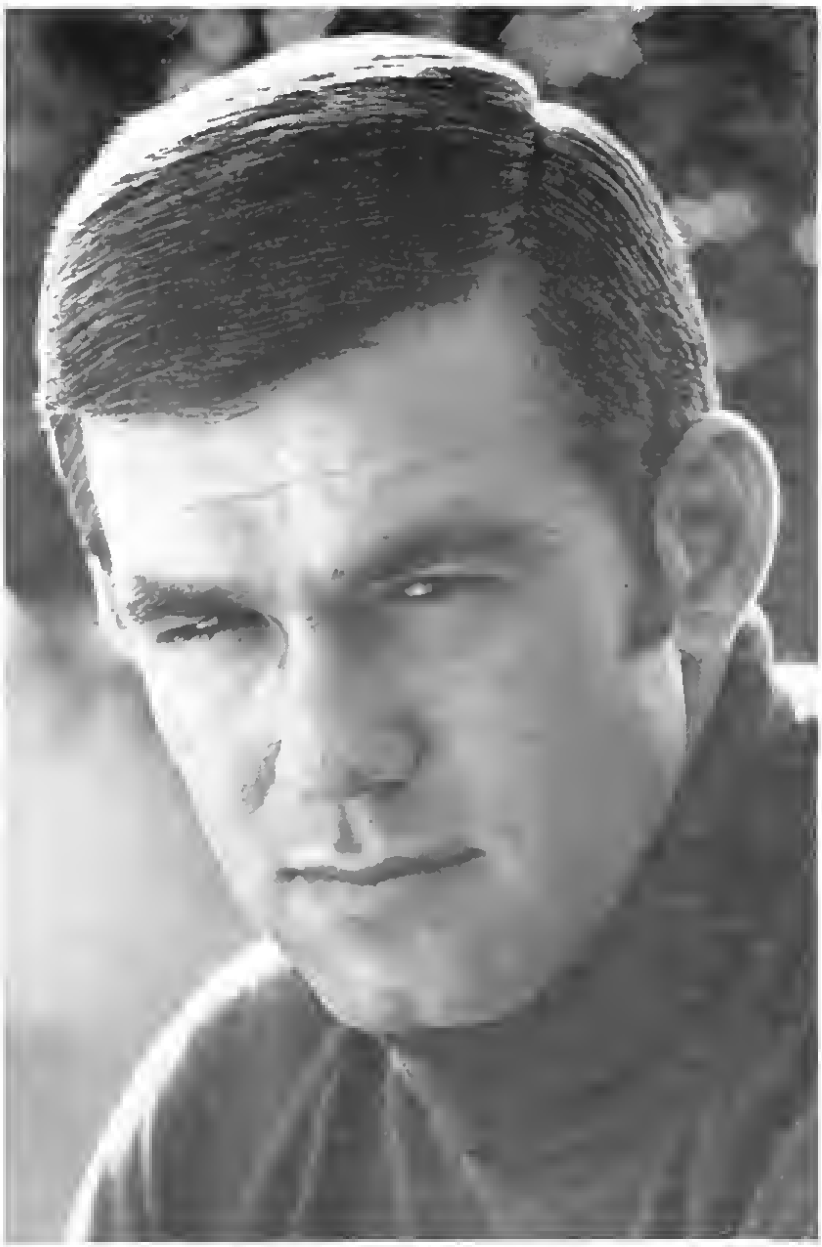
Apparently, he did. McHale said he would be happy to have MacKenzie join the Expos after Sept. 1, when big league clubs are allowed to increase their rosters to 40 players. And now MacKenzie is an Expo—though he doesn't do anything except pitch batting practice—and by the end of the season he will have his 27 days. McHale also asked MacKenzie what sort of salary he expected. "I told him I didn't expect anything," MacKenzie says. "They're treating me like a ballplayer, and that's all I want."

The whole thing seems so right, somehow. Who else but an expansion club in its first year, a club doing dismally on the field and splendidly at the gate, one that excites wild and irrational loyalties, could have signed Yale's baseball coach to a player contract for nothing to do nothing?

It takes away the sting of the Mets' going legitimate.

THEY SAID IT

- Harry Walker, Houston Astros manager, insisting that he would not trade his wife for Elizabeth Taylor: "Miss Taylor is a beautiful woman, sure. But how do I know she won't nag me? Can she cook? Can she handle money? Can she keep the house neat? Can I *talk* baseball with her?"
- Red Schoendienst, St. Louis Cardinals manager, after Roberto Clemente robbed the Cardinals of victory with an amazing catch: "I'll bet he couldn't make that same play again—not even on instant replay."
- Frank Broyles, football coach at Arkansas, where synthetic turf has been installed, on an unanticipated problem: "We'll have to bring in real grass for the coin toss so that we can tell which way the wind is blowing." **END**



Tim McCarver, star catcher for the pennant-winning St. [illegible] Cardinals, uses Dep for Men

Tim McCarver goes to a hairstylist. Gonna start a rhubarb, are you?

Good luck! Tim defends hairstyling like he does home plate. And once you've seen the amazing things a stylist can do for *your* appearance, you'll know why. He can make you look taller or shorter or fatter or skinnier. Whatever you'd like. In Tim's case it was the square-jawed look that needed rounding. The stylist had a little help, though. From new Dep for Men Hairstyling Creme — the only hairstyling product that looks like a cream, feels like a cream, but styles like a gel. And Dep for Men Hair Spray — the one that holds a style neatly in place all day. Also from Dep for Men: Regular and dry hair formula Hairdress Styling Gels, and new super-holding formula hair spray.

Dep for men-the hairstyling products

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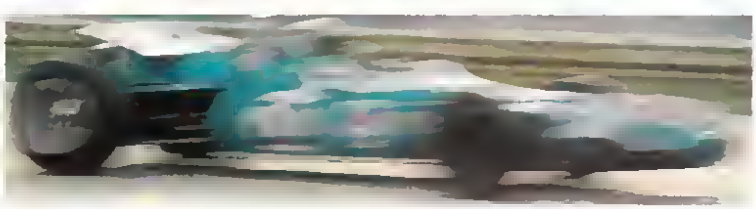
Sports Illustrated
SEPTEMBER 22, 1229

HAIL TO KING JACKIE !

Scotland's Jackie Stewart seized the Italian Grand Prix and so became the world champion and mod god of auto racing, over which he reigns in some splendor

by ROBERT F. JONES

A tartan helmet is Stewart's Scottish trademark, but his opulent Swiss estate owes much to a French-English-American car.



CONTINUED

DUNLOP

On the third lap of the Italian Grand Prix at Monza last week, just as the cars were approaching the wrenching curve known as *La Parabolica*, a rabbit darted out of the infield grass and ended its life under the wheels of Jackie Stewart's Matra. Sixty-five laps later, with the rabbit little more than a blur of fur on the line through that treacherous corner, Stewart swept under the flag to win both Monza and the world driving championship. The only casualty of the day, if you discount a few thousand pinched bottoms in victory lane, was the unfortunate rabbit. Nobody mourned him, but let's try to imagine his last impressions: the sudden approach of the pack—15 cars flat-out, black blots emerging from the Ascari curve and magnifying almost instantly into giant torpedoes of blue and red and marigold orange. The noise ripping upward from a moan through a snarl to a steady explosion. The drivers barely visible within their bonedomes. Stewart's close-set, sensitive, mud-colored eyes, with one drooping lid masked behind the smoky visor of his helmet, the eyes of a hunter flicking down and seeing the rabbit sprint and freeze on the track, widening, holding firm on the line ahead. The broad reach of the Dunlop tire blurring into treadlessness, rising above the doomed animal. Thump.

Arrivederci, rabbit.

"It was the right front tire that did for him, and I was turning about 190 miles an hour," Jackie recalled later. "Bad luck for Mr. Bunny, but it could have been worse for the rest of us had I lost control, we were packed that close together. At any rate the rabbit chose the wrong time to die. He missed a very close race."

That is the Scottish understatement of the year. At the finish Stewart literally nosed out Austria's Jochen Rindt, the bent-beaked young Lotus driver whom many Formula 1 watchers consider to be no less skillful than Jackie. The third- and fourth-place cars of France's Jean-Pierre Beltoise and New Zealand's Bruce McLaren were less than a second behind. Beltoise is Stewart's junior teammate and a man of long hair and stubborn faith in his vocation. When his left elbow was crushed in a 1964 accident he asked the doctors to lock it permanently in the driving position. McLaren, driving his own McLaren-Ford, won enough points (three) to edge Belgium's Jackie Ickx, a Brabham driver, for second place in the championship standings, 24–22. It was a ferocious race all the way around, with as many as seven cars in the first flight most of the 200 miles, and the exhilarating finish was unusual for a Formula 1 race, where a mere five-second lead looks long to the spectators. Stewart could have won the championship by finishing third, but it is not in his nature to back into victory, as Monza so clearly demonstrated.

John Young Stewart is many things, all of them tough. He is a hippie-haired Scotsman, an Olympic class wing shot, a 30-year-old Gemini with all the classic hang-ups of that sign. He is the owner of a $240,000 Swiss château, Clayton House, which serves as home, investment and refuge from British taxes. He is a connoisseur of mod fashions and beautiful women, a collector of elegant wristwatches, a dedicated daddy to a brace of happy, towheaded sons. And now, with six Grands Prix won out of eight so far this year, and with three more races to run, Stewart stands a good chance of breaking the late Jimmy Clark's season record of seven victories. Jackie could coast through the Canadian, American and Mexican races and still be No. 1. But that is not the Stewart style.

Jackie reviewed the rabbit incident the morning after the race as he sipped iced orange juice on the veranda of the Villa d'Este, that magnificent monument to good taste and blocked fire on the western shore of Lake Como, just south of where they rubbed out Mussolini 25 years ago. Behind him rose the formal gardens, all flowers and rills and darting blue dragonflies. Before him lolled the lake, tracked with the wakes of hydrofoils, water skis and long, slim rowing shells. Jackie likes the Villa d'Este and the Villa d'Este likes him. The waiters call him "Meestair Stewairt" and approach him often with menus to be autographed. Jackie's boys, Paul, 3, and Mark, 1½, can run their countless Corgi models of Jags and Lotuses and BRMs and Brabhams through the sandbox, or chat with the creaky Englishwomen who drowse beneath the plane trees.

"My name is Paul Stewart. Vrrroarsharrooooom!"

"Oh, deah. That's a good boy, and why don't you run back to your nanny?"

Jackie's strawberry-blonde wife Helen can stroll beside "the only floating swimming pool in Europe" in her latest Pucci pants suit, or take the sun while reading the latest Jacqueline Susann ("It's not all porno," Jackie says in his high-pitched burr, "or at least she don't drive it into you at every page"). Anyway, the Villa d'Este spells holiday for Jackie, and he hasn't had one in five years—except for a few days in a hospital after he crashed, nearly drowned in a cockpit full of gasoline and broke a few small bones three years ago at Spa. So this year's Monza was a chance to cool it, and Jackie picked up the option with the same élan that he devotes to his driving.

The Wednesday of race week dawned dark and wet. Thunder rolled over the Alps and cascaded down Como like a flight of heavy bombers, drowning out the churchbells and rattling the chandeliers. It was hardly a day for lounging around the pool, so Jackie squirmed into a modish dark blue pinch-waisted suit, whistled up his borrowed silver Ferrari 365 and bellowed off into the rain toward Milan. Something in the weather was making him philosophical and, for a lad who dropped out of school at the age of 15, Jackie Stewart is a remarkably articulate philosopher. "Every athlete has to go through three stages," he mused, "arriving, readjustment and consolidation. When you arrive in a sport, you get bigheaded. I defy any man to say he's never been bigheaded. Some just stay that way. I went through the bigheaded bit when I was a shooter, shooting traps for Scotland. To shoot with the lion rampant on your jacket and to be just 16 or 17, ah, that'll do it every time. Anyway, in 1959 and 1960 I won the British, Scottish, Irish, Welsh and English championships and a third ranking in the Coupe des Nations. Then I got thrashed."

A Volkswagen flicked its lights impatiently behind us, and Jackie pulled the Ferrari over to let the angry little bug squirt past. "Eat 'em up, Otto," he said.

"There's nothing more valuable than having been beaten, soundly thrashed, after you've gotten good. It was in 1960, on my 21st birthday, the last day of tri-

continued

In these vignettes of the champion, Stewart leads Monza field in typically tight, tough racing; lets his son Paul get feel of wheel in the pits as his wife Helen watches; and hoists the victory trophy after a spectacular finish.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TONY TRIOLO

als for the British Olympic trap team. Three of us were shooting it out for two spots in the team. I'd beaten the other guns consistently, but on one run of 25 clays I missed seven or eight birds. Unheard of, but there it was. It was a terrible, terrible blow to my ego, but it was the first time I ever learned to control my disappointment. I've had two others since. One was losing Indy in '66 with nine laps to go. Scavenge pump failed, and I pushed the car the rest of the lap, thinking that Formula 1 rules prevailed and I'd get credit for the lap. The other was running out of petrol on the last lap of the Belgian Grand Prix last year. I wanted that one badly. Nah then, you get very philosophical about disappointments. Humble, maybe. But you can't get into the habit of losing nobly. If you start letting them beat you nobly, they'll always beat you nobly. And you don't get paid for nobly."

Jackie gave up trapshooting in 1962, having shifted his competitive affections to motor racing. Speed buffs know the legend: Stewart learning the rudiments at his father's garage in Dumbarton. An older brother, Jimmy, racked up in a couple of races. Mother forbidding young Jackie to drive competitively. His driving a plywood-bodied Marcos GT under the name of A. N. Other. His winning 23 of 53 Formula III races during his first pro year. Whipping Bruce McLaren in a test at Brands Hatch his first time ever in a single-seater. Becoming an instant star.

Now, heading into Milan, Jackie ponders the differences between shooting and driving. "Shooting always required far more dedication from me than driving," he says. "Driving was a lark, still is, for that matter. I built up a terrible distaste for shooting. I was a bundle of nerves, and that made it a terrible sport. What's more, it was expensive. After I quit I didn't lift a gun for two or three years. If it has to happen again, I'd like it to happen that way in driving. Just get fed up with it and drop it. I don't want to have to quit by getting old or broken up or something." He was quiet for a minute, thinking perhaps of Stirling Moss.

The rain had thrashed on ahead by the time he reached Milan. There, in the cool stone arcades off the Via S. Andrea, Jackie bought a quick $100 worth of Carrano shoes—square-toed boots and loafers—and kept a rendezvous with his good shooting friend, Carlo Del Ventisette, with whom he was to drive out to the Beretta factory at Brescia and test the over-and-unders. Though he is through with competitive shooting, Jackie is an enthusiastic game shot and wanted to add a brace of matched Berettas to his Boss and Merkel side-by-side shotguns.

Stewart collects friends with the same attention to quality that he gives to guns and watches, and Carlo is a prime specimen. A slim Milanese merchant, as quick of wit as he is of eye, generous and competitive, Carlo is the least known member of Jackie's set, which has included such disparate types as General Curtis LeMay, Dick and Liz and the murdered barber, Jay Sebring. Carlo's family sells chandeliers and antiques from a Milanese shop that would delight anyone with a taste for glinting crystal and warm old wood. He himself is 38, looks 28 and shot for the Italian trap team until last year. He gets Jackie discounts on nearly all his Italian purchases.

The Ferrari belonged to Carlo who drove out along the *autostrada* toward Brescia, dicing with a Maserati at 130 mph along the way. "A truck," Carlo snorted as he passed the Maser. "Nothing more than a lorry." Jackie dozed in the front seat as the radio bleated Italian rock. At the Beretta plant, a splendid stone castle cleaner than any of its American equivalents, the union jack flanked the Italian tricolor in welcome for Stewart. On a quick tour of the premises Jackie was most impressed with the man who tests the automatic shotguns. A burly gent with the wild eyes of one who has heard too many loud noises, he fires 2,500 rounds a day, shooting up into a wooded hillside. The trees and brush were mowed into odd patterns by his efforts. He varies the routine by shooting now and then from the hip: four rounds, just like that, blamblamblamblam—or one-handed. "If he took off his shoes," said the Beretta director, "he could do it with his toes." As we left, a lone cabbage moth fluttered into range. The gun-tester's eyes gleamed and the moth became confetti.

Out on the Beretta trap range, Jackie put on his little black corduroy Beatle cap and supple leather shooting vest. "This vest once belonged to Carlo," he explained. "Whenever we shoot together, we have a friendly little competition. What'll it be this time, Carlo?"

"Shoes," said Carlo.

"Poor fellow," said Jackie. "We've come all this way with Carlo. We've used his Ferrari, we've used his tires, we've used his petrol. And now he's going to lose his shoes." And he did. Jackie powdered 24 out of 25 birds, missing only the last, while Carlo—psyched out by Stewart's aplomb—missed seven. But Carlo's 17-year-old son, Renzo, shot a perfect 25, and Jackie turned the shoes over to him with relief. On the way back home, with a promise from Beretta to deliver two top-quality game guns and a "simple" trap model by the end of the racing season, Jackie was exultant at the wheel of the Ferrari. The speedometer showed 150 mph through traffic—just a shade more than Jackie would average four days later at Monza.

The interval between guns and engines was filled with business. Stewart's managers lined up an endorsement deal with Rob Roy scotch, and between qualifying runs Jackie oversaw the application of the decal on the bonnet of his blue Matra. Rob's upraised claymore went well with the band of Royal Stewart tartan that adorns Jackie's helmet, but the old warrior might have been pained to learn that Jackie rarely drinks. Though not as pained as Jackie, who sipped a Pimm's Cup No. 1 at the Villa d'Este one night and promptly developed a sore left shoulder. "Must be a nerve I bruised somewhere," he said.

While Helen drifted through the blue night of Como, a Nicean bark among the rowboats, Jackie dined with Juan Manuel Fangio, a longtime hero of his, discussing a possible appearance in the Argentine at a race Fangio is organizing. Jackie also turned up at the Sporting Club of Monza to receive a driver of the year award. While he chatted in his super-cool way with the assembled guests, Rindt played game after savage game of Ping-Pong on the Club's sunken table, smashing his rivals as he hoped to smash Jackie on the following afternoon.

Race day at Monza once again brought rain, this time a steady, depressing drizzle that ended only an hour before starting time. The crowd—some 120,000—was as usual a Ferrari crowd, though the single red machine driven by Mexico's Pedro Rodriguez was barely competitive. Young men in gold-buttoned Renaissance shirts clustered

around the pits, tape recording the engine noises and then rhapsodizing over the instant replay. Tough little Milanese kids circulated through the crowd, puffing on regular cigarettes with the same self-important smirk American kids devote to grass. Police in at least five kinds of uniforms strutted around Monza Park, ogling the birds and busting anyone who looked at them cross-eyed. From the pits came the glint of gold teeth and the flash of mineral-water bottles. The race itself was a whirligig of sound and color, with Stewart leading the pack for 59 of the 68 laps, and anyone who says he knows exactly what happened on any of those laps simply wasn't there. Monza isn't built that way, as Jackie would be the first to acknowledge.

"The lead changed fewer times than I thought it would," he said. "I think I lost it and got it back about seven times. I always made it a point to be in the lead when I could passing the grandstand. But I'd expected the lead to change more often. It's very difficult to break away at Monza—almost impossible on such a fast course. About a third of the way along, when Surtees went into the pits and came back out again just as we were passing the finish line, I thought I could get enough of a tow from him to break away, but John wasn't moving fast enough. All the way along, whenever I looked back, there were Jochen and Bruce sitting on my shoulders like vultures. But the real surprise was Jean-Pierre. At the end there he behaved like any normal, healthy young man who wants to win a motor race. He bloody near did, too."

One of these weeks Beltoise is bound to do it, if only because the day of the Matra seems to be dawning. Matra is a French missile company largely subsidized by the government, and automobiles—both Formula I and II chassis, plus sports prototypes and road cars—amount to only a tiny fraction of its total business. Like most Grand Prix cars today the Matras are powered by Cosworth-Ford engines made in England with the enthusiastic consent of the controlling American Ford Motor Co. (At Monza, only the sixth-place Ferrari and the Brabhams mounted their own power plants.) While France would prefer an all-French car, the Matra chassis is reason enough for jubilation. Not since the legendary Bugatti has that nation had a first-class Grand Prix contender.

In the moments after the race, Jochen Rindt was the saddest young Austrian in the world. He had finished in the points in only one of the season's seven previous races—a fourth at Silverstone—and now his machine had finally been ready. It wasn't ready enough. While Jackie and Helen were braving the mob with the victor's wreath around both their necks, Jochen was weaving his Lotus back to the garage, a filter-tipped cigarette pasted in the middle of his face, his right foot giving off mean, loud jabs on the accelerator.

"Well," said Jackie, "I've been unhappy, too. We do it to each other all the time in this business." **END**

The British Grand Prix was win No. 5 in Stewart's big season. Here, in a photographer's impression of fluent speed, Jackie drives to victory.

MAYBE IT'S TIME TO BREAK UP THE METS

'Met Brutality' a placard read in Pittsburgh, and the transformation of the New Yorkers was complete. Winning 10 in a row, they routed the Pirates and left the stumbling Cubs weeping far behind

by WILLIAM LEGGETT

Among the artifacts in the clubhouse locker of New York Met Outfielder Ronald Alan Swoboda are three buttons which proclaim WE'RE # UN, I AM LOVED, and WE'VE COME A LONG WAY BABY. Last Saturday evening Swoboda, one of the authentic folk heroes of modern-day baseball, walked up to home plate at Forbes Field in Pittsburgh with the bases loaded and the score tied 1–1 in the eighth inning. At that point in his career Swoboda was being looked upon with something less than adoration by even the most dedicated of his fans. In 11 previous at bats against Pittsburgh he had failed to hit the ball beyond the infield nine times. One time when Swoboda did hit it out of the infield he lost sight of the ball and stayed in the batter's box long enough to turn a double into a single. But the way the Mets were playing last week at home and away only one thing could happen with the bases loaded in the eighth inning of a tie game. And it did. Oh, did it ever.

Swoboda drove a pitch thrown by Twiggy Hartenstein so far and so high toward left-center field that Pirate Outfielders Willie Stargell and Matty Alou merely turned around, folded their arms and looked at it, just as if it were a piece of fine art hanging in a gallery. Which, in a way, it was. Young Mets and old Mets, good Mets and bad Mets, smart Mets and dumb Mets jumped to their feet to the dugout to welcome Swoboda home and thank him for yet another miracle in one of the more singular finishing drives ever launched in pursuit of a championship.

On the 15th of August the Mets were 9½ games behind the Chicago Cubs in the Eastern Division of the National League; by the end of last week, thanks to a 10-game winning streak and a recent record of 26-7, New York was out in front by 3½ games and playing with a professional excellence so un-Metlike as to be uncanny. They were touched with magic and those gloves that once went clank in the night were being worn by players on other teams. The Mets had become so good, in fact, that outside of Forbes Field last Saturday a hippie sat on the sidewalk with a sign on her lap that read MET BRUTALITY.

The Cubs, the club New York pulled down from behind, were playing bad baseball. In losing 10 of 11 games, Chicago began to resemble the Pholdin' Philadelphia Phillies of 1964, and the fingernails of panic began to dig deep into the back of Cub Manager Leo Durocher. "You can wait until the snow comes over the bleeping clubhouse door and I won't have anything to say," said Durocher at one point in the decline. "No comment," he kept repeating. "No bleeping comment."

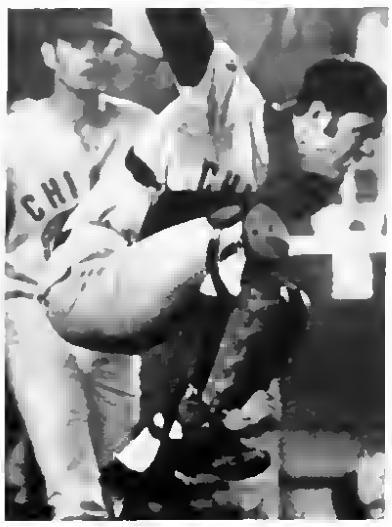
What it looked like was that Leo had bleeped up his own team. Since that weekend in July when Durocher jumped his own club to visit his stepson's summer camp, the Cubbies have played like a team with the blind staggers, winning only eight of 20 home games. They kept leaving the door wide-open, but the logical contenders, St. Louis, and up until the start of last week the Pirates themselves, could never cross the threshold.

Chicago did not get into real trouble, however, until a week ago Monday at Shea Stadium. In retrospect, the first pitch from Cub Pitcher Bill Hands to Met lead-off batter Tommie Agee probably decided the entire course of events for the Mets during the next seven days. Hands drove Agee away from the plate and into the dirt with a high, tight fastball. It was an intimidating pitch, a pitch that can work in either of two ways: demoralize the opponent or make a biter out of the sleeping dog. The Mets decided to bite. New York Pitcher Jerry Koosman retaliated by hitting Ron Santo hard as the fine Cub third baseman led off the second inning. And in his next two at bats, Agee hit a two-run homer and a double, later scoring on a close play at home. Those were all the runs needed to beat Chicago.

The following night Pitcher Tom Seaver was the Cubs' bête noire. He held Chicago at bay while New York scored seven runs, and as early as the sixth inning the 58,000 fans were caroling "Goodbye Leo" to Durocher and waving their handkerchiefs at him. Durocher sat alone on the bench shrouded in silence, the fa-

Gil Hodges is a bemused manager as . .

Cubs' Randy Hundley rages over call at plate



mous lip flapping no more. Chicago's once-proud 9½-game lead was down to a lonely half.

At 8:43 the next evening the Mets, by virtue of having won a 12-inning game from the Montreal Expos in the first half of a twi-night doubleheader, moved into first place on percentage points. Joan Payson, the Mets' owner, stepped down from her box next to the team's dugout and walked toward home plate wiping tears from her eyes. When New York won the second game while Chicago was losing in Philadelphia, the Mets were on top and not going to be very easy to catch.

Professional baseball had endured for 92 years before the New York Mets first got their hands on it back in the spring of 1962. While they couldn't quite kill the game, they certainly brought it to one knee. Doing things that had never even been imagined before, they drove their fans into one of the oddest diversions ever developed: writing on bedsheets. While it was long believed that the simple act of putting on a Yankee uniform caused players to perform better, a Met uniform suddenly turned some previously gifted players into clowns. In their first seven years of existence the Mets finished a total of 288½ games out of first place and built their all-important loss column to 737.

But in the spring of 1967 Tom Seaver joined the team and the franchise had a young player of outstanding quality. The Mets had thought enough of Seaver in his first year of baseball to have him pitch for their Triple A farm team at Jacksonville, and he led the league in games started while splitting 24 decisions. Then Seaver was advanced to the majors, and he was amazed at what he found out about the Mets. "There was an aura of defeatism," he said last week, "and I refused to accept it. Maybe some of the others started to feel how I felt because I noticed that the team seemed to play better behind me than it did for any other pitcher."

In his first two seasons Seaver won 32 games for New York and was twice selected to pitch in the All-Star Game. Anyone who came in contact with him quickly realized that he was not only an exceptional pitcher but an exceptional young man. Bing Devine, who worked for the Mets for three years before returning to the Cardinals as general manager, once said of Seaver, "In every aspect of his life and career, Tom Seaver is well organized. You don't meet many like him; they just aren't around."

Durocher stares darkly at a losing cause

while Joan Payson enjoys her new Mets.

Other fine pitchers followed Seaver to the Mets, and in 1968 that pitching staff impressed anyone who watched baseball. Koosman won 19 games. Jim McAndrew came out of Lost Nation, Iowa with a degree in psychology and enough ability to forge a 2.28 earned run average. Nolan Ryan, a 22-year-old who had once struck out 387 hitters in 261 minor league innings, came to the majors and had blister and arm problems but now seems to have recovered from both. Gary Gentry arrived from Arizona State with a one-year college record of 17-1. Tug McGraw, only 25, moved into the bullpen and pitched very well. With the experience, advice and know-how of three veterans—Don Cardwell, Ron Taylor and Cal Koonce—the Met staff was working and learning at the same time. By last Sunday evening they had not given up a single home run in 181 innings covering 18 games, and they were facing clubs with good power—San Francisco, Philadelphia, Chicago, Montreal and Pittsburgh.

The team also had some hitting at last. Cleon Jones, despite two recent injuries, was the league's leading batter. Tommie Agee had hit 26 homers and knocked in 73 runs and was on his way to the National League's comeback of the year award following a 1968 season in which he hit five homers and drove in only 17 runs. Second Baseman Ken Boswell, a youngster who should eventually become one of the better hitters in the league, batted .473 during an 18-game stretch before leaving the team last weekend for his regular turn of military duty. Obviously, too, the Mets had the manager of the year in Gil Hodges, who has fitted his players together so well that everyone feels he is a part of the team.

When New York arrived in Pittsburgh last week Hodges was without Jones, Boswell and Art Shamsky, a .303 hitter who observed the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah. But the Mets won three of four anyway. Sitting on a table in the New York clubhouse after beating the Pirates by virtue of Swoboda's home run, Tom Seaver said, "I've always read that in September baseball comes down to pitching, and that it is harder to play once you are in first place and not trying to catch up. I really haven't had the time to think about that because everything has happened so quickly. It has all been so fantastic. On Friday we won both games of a doubleheader 1-0 when the pitcher drove in the winning run in each game. Has that ever happened before?"

Nobody has come up with the answer to that yet. And probably nobody will. By the time this season is over, though, the Mets—despite playing six fewer games at Shea against the Giants and Dodgers because of divisional play—will go over two million in home attendance. The explanation is simple enough. First, they are loved—which is not really anything new. The difference is that, entering the final two weeks of the season, they are undeniably # UN too. They have, baby, come a long, long way. **END**

TOSSING BOMBS INTO THE HOOPS

Only weeks before the players will start shooting, the American Basketball Association declares open war to force a quick merger with the NBA. Now there may be as much action in court as on the courts **by GARY RONBERG**

The rumors of August have become the guns of September in pro basketball, and the explosions could easily lead to chaos in October. The established National Basketball Association and the struggling American Basketball Association are at war. The barrages of real and false charges, the salvos of press releases, counterreleases and threats of multimillion-dollar suits have generated so much smoke, heat and bitterness that the head of the ABA, James Gardner, has gone so far as to say of his opposite number in the NBA, "Walter Kennedy is a bigot and a hypocrite." What NBA people are saying about those in the ABA is hardly less inflammatory.

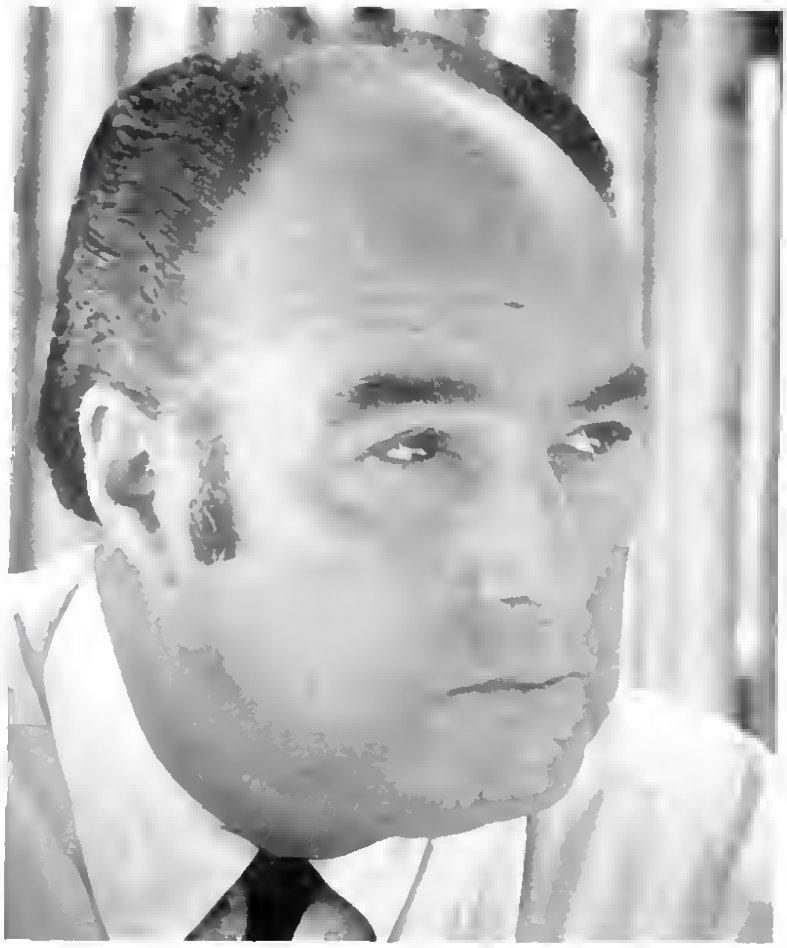
Considering what is going on, though, it is not surprising that even the more sensible people in the sport are losing their heads. For example:

• At the same time that an ABA spokesman was telling a SPORTS ILLUSTRATED correspondent in Los Angeles that the Atlanta Hawks' Zelmo Beaty had just signed a contract with the ABA, the general manager of the Hawks was telling another SI reporter in New York that Beaty had made an appointment to sign his NBA contract the next day. (At week's end Beaty had not signed with anyone.)

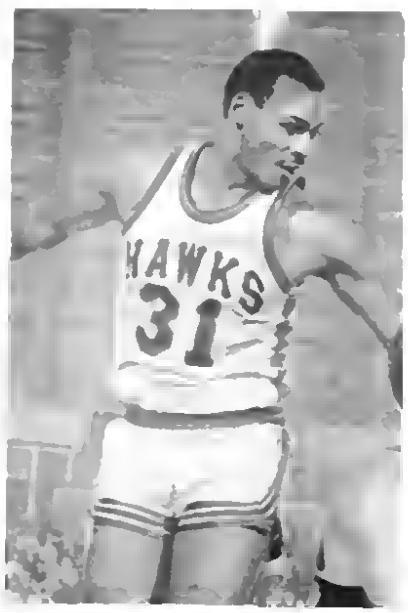
• In North Carolina an ABA coach told a reporter that Bob Cousy told him that John Havlicek of the Boston Celtics had contacted the ABA and was prepared to jump because he was mad at Bill Russell and didn't want to play in Boston anymore. Bob Cousy said he never said any such thing to anyone and that as far as he knew Havlicek was too secure with the Celtics to contemplate such a move. (Havlicek said he was leaving his home in Columbus, Ohio to talk contract with Red Auerbach in Boston.)

• In New York the chief of officials for the ABA, Sid Borgia, who had once been supervisor of officials for the NBA, helped arrange for four NBA referees to jump to the ABA. Their move was announced last Thursday—and the ABA fired Borgia on Friday.

• That same Thursday, in Philadelphia, the NBA's 76ers called a press conference to confirm the security of their star



Defender Walter Kennedy worries that NBA stars like Atlanta's Zelmo Beaty will jump



center, Luke Jackson, while—at the same moment—the ABA was announcing that Luke Jackson would play for the Carolina Cougars starting next season. At 3 p.m. that day SI Correspondent Smith Barrier got on a plane leaving Philadelphia for Greensboro, N.C. and sat down several seats from Jackson. When they reached Greensboro, Barrier walked up to Jackson and asked, "What are you doing *here*? The 76ers are looking for you in Philadelphia."

"Yes, I know," said Jackson. "People have been trying to reach me all day. My wife took all the calls."

"Why did you switch leagues?"

"Well, I don't know yet. I haven't signed a contract with the Cougars."

"*What*? It was announced by the ABA this morning in New York."

"Yes, I know. Isn't that funny?"

The next day the ABA fired the biggest gun in the war so far. Scarcely heard by many shell-shocked observers, it made a powerful impression among NBA officials, and rightly so. The ABA declared that Luke Jackson *would not* bother to play out his one-year option with Philadelphia but would start performing for the Carolina Cougars this season. Until then the ABA had at least made the pretense of honoring NBA contracts, signing players with the understanding that they would play out their options before *jumping*. Now all rules were off. Left with no choice, the NBA will try to force players who jump to abide by their contracts. In the Jackson case the NBA appeared to have the last word. After he signed with the ABA, the NBA persuaded him that his NBA contract had precedence and was still valid, and he then signed a new three-year contract with Philadelphia. Still, if either league goes to court over such matters, there is a strong possibility that some of today's pro stars will be playing basketball in their backyards for a spell, as Rick Barry did when he jumped from San Francisco (NBA) to Oakland (ABA) two years ago.

In all the confusion a few other facts were clear. The ABA, borrowing the hook of the Oakland Raiders' Al Davis, who helped force pro football's merger three years ago, is determined to bring about an immediate pro basketball merger or at least agreement on a common draft beginning next spring when a glittering cast of college players will be graduated. Talks of a merger had, in fact, started back on Aug. 7, only to be broken off abruptly when Walter Kennedy charged the ABA with "a breach of good faith in the negotiation procedures." The NBA, said Kennedy, could not condone the ABA's failure to name the player that one of its teams had allegedly signed off an NBA roster. Furthermore, he said, the NBA had not been informed of the possibility that the ABA's Oakland franchise would be moved to Washington, D.C., which is Baltimore territory, according to the NBA.

The ABA, on the other hand, was still miffed at the NBA for stealing one of *its* star players, Connie Hawkins, who had played out his option with the Pittsburgh Pipers. More important was the ABA's discovery that one of the requirements for merger was an NBA bid for indemnity of $11 million, similar to the

continued

Attacker James Gardner is accused of trying to sign collegians like Purdue's Rick Mount

NFL's demand of the AFL. "So the price is $1 million per club, is it?" snapped one ABA executive. "Well, let's take that money and go out and buy $11 million worth of top-drawer, superstar, NBA talent. Then we'll merge, and we'll do it on *our* terms, not theirs."

"For two years now," said Jim Hardy, general manager of the ABA's Los Angeles Stars, "the NBA has looked upon the ABA as a minor skin irritation that would dry up and go away. Well, now they must realize it's genuine cancer."

Until last spring the ABA really had been little more than an irritation as far as the NBA was concerned. Under the erratic leadership of Commissioner George Mikan, the ABA was, in fact, just sitting there waiting to die as the NBA signed up every college star that came along. With few bright spots, attendance was miserable, and the quality of play was not much better. Then the ABA owners fired Mikan and, in the absence of a commissioner, gave most of his authority to Gardner, a new guy on the block who had just bought the ABA's floundering Houston franchise and moved it to his home state, North Carolina.

Young, rich and persuasive, Gardner, a former Congressman, brought the ABA drive and ideas. The drive was his own, but the ideas were borrowed. "Al Davis wrote the book when he raided the NFL," Gardner admitted. "We've read the book, and we'll follow it to the letter." Gardner succeeded in getting the ABA moving, in spite of what those who claimed to know him called "his inconsistency." (He had had a similar problem during his political career. Once while running for governor of North Carolina, he appeared in an industrial town to push a state tobacco tax—a popular stand in the area—only to oppose it a few hours later, in tobacco country.) Today support of Gardner within ABA ranks is still sharply divided. "Those who resent Jim are those who aren't being realistic," says Richard Tinkham, an attorney and part owner of the Indiana Pacers. "They are the people who want a merger at *any* cost. All of us want to merge someday; Jim just wants to make sure the terms will be fair and equitable."

Gardner first shook the NBA by signing Philadelphia star Billy Cunningham (that unnamed player). He infuriated the rival league—and college coaches across the country—by allowing the ABA's Denver team to sign Spencer Haywood, a University of Detroit All-America and Olympic star who has two years of college eligibility remaining, as a "hardship case." Sitting in his modest office in the Tarrytown Shopping Center in Rocky Mount, N.C., Gardner surveyed the war zone. "All that's holding up a merger is Walter Kennedy," he said, a soft, sugary accent coating each word. "I'll tell you why he's throwing up this smoke screen, yelling about our procedures and all. He's being hit and hit hard, that's why. Kennedy is a bigot and a hypocrite. He acts so pious, when the truth of the matter is that the NBA had Lew Alcindor signed, sealed and delivered long before he graduated. [Alcindor denies this.] We didn't have a chance in the world at Alcindor. The NBA has done everything it could to kill off the ABA.

"Contrary to what you've read or heard, we are not trying to sign college players before they graduate. None of that crop of seniors—Mount, Maravich, Murphy and so on—will play in our league this year, because I, personally, wouldn't allow it. The only reason we haven't clarified this particular point earlier is that at our stage of the game a knock is as good as a plug." [All of the college players allegedly contacted by the ABA had already said they would stay in school.]

Last Thursday, shortly after Dave Bing of Detroit and Luke Jackson had confirmed their jumps to the ABA, Walter Kennedy sat in his office, 23 stories above Manhattan's Pennsylvania Station. It is a big office, paneled and thickly carpeted, and it says Establishment. Kennedy is 56, he lives in Stamford, Conn. and catches the 5:09 home whenever he can. For the past several weeks he has been staying overnight in the city much more often. "You see what we're up against," he said. "This is a war in which we can't attack. If we did, what could we gain? There's nobody in the ABA we want. Gardner is leading a harassment program designed to pressure us into merging cheap, and there's no way he will succeed. You never know when to believe him. I have a few friends in Washington, and I've made myself familiar with his track record. He keeps running around, insisting there's going to be a merger in two weeks or three weeks. Well, *I* say there isn't going to be any merger for three or four years—if then. What Gardner is trying to do is sell stock in ABA franchises. He's saying, 'Buy into the Pittsburgh Pipers now at $3 a share, and when the merger comes along you'll be in great shape.' He was trying to scare all those college kids into signing by telling them there wouldn't be any money around *after* a merger. Then he stopped for the first time and considered the weight of public opinion building against him."

The college coaches, led by Adolph Rupp of Kentucky, had led that charge. "I'm the guy who first blew the whistle on the ABA," said Rupp. "My attention was called to the fact that, all over the United States, one of the leagues was making an attempt to meddle with boys who had competition remaining. We've always had an understanding with the NBA about that, and it's worked out nicely. The ABA said the Haywood case was hardship. Well, many other cases are hardship, too. They've fooled around with Calvin Murphy; George King [the Purdue coach] says they've fooled around with Mount; and they've fooled around with Maravich, too. They've made all kinds of crazy, fantastic offers. It's time for this league to adhere to the rules. The NBA always has."

Echoing Walter Kennedy's thinking, many NBA officials also believe that standing pat in a defensive posture is their best bet. They are secure in most of the big cities and large arenas that are essential for the financial health of any major league franchise, and they have a lucrative network TV contract, while their rival does not. Says San Diego's Pete Newell: "No doubt there will be problems with competitive signing of players, and it's common knowledge that not all NBA clubs are in the black. But the advantages of merger aren't that significant as opposed to keeping the NBA intact. The NBA has always signed most of the players it wants. Competition has had an effect only when we are negotiating with a big star. In most cases, however, salaries are escalating because the economy is escalating."

Ben Kerner, former owner of the St. Louis Hawks and one of the sport's best brains, says of a merger: "The NBA would be doing the ABA a favor, lending it stature it doesn't have. Let's say the ABA does get two or three of the NBA's stars—the NBA has 50 of them.

continued

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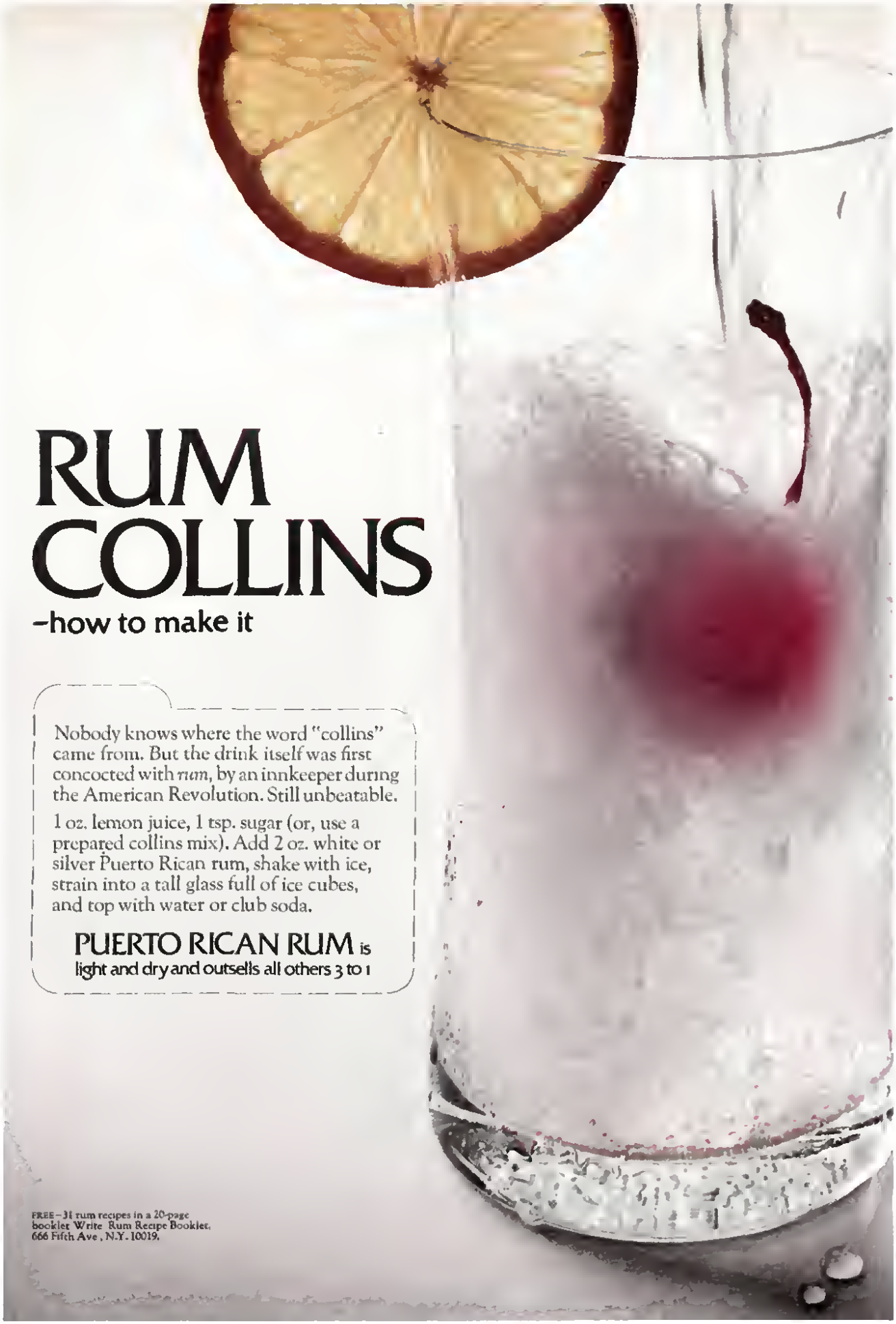


RUM COLLINS

–how to make it

Nobody knows where the word "collins" came from. But the drink itself was first concocted with *rum*, by an innkeeper during the American Revolution. Still unbeatable.

1 oz. lemon juice, 1 tsp. sugar (or, use a prepared collins mix). Add 2 oz. white or silver Puerto Rican rum, shake with ice, strain into a tall glass full of ice cubes, and top with water or club soda.

PUERTO RICAN RUM is
light and dry and outsells all others 3 to 1

FREE—31 rum recipes in a 20-page booklet. Write Rum Recipe Booklet, 666 Fifth Ave., N.Y. 10019.

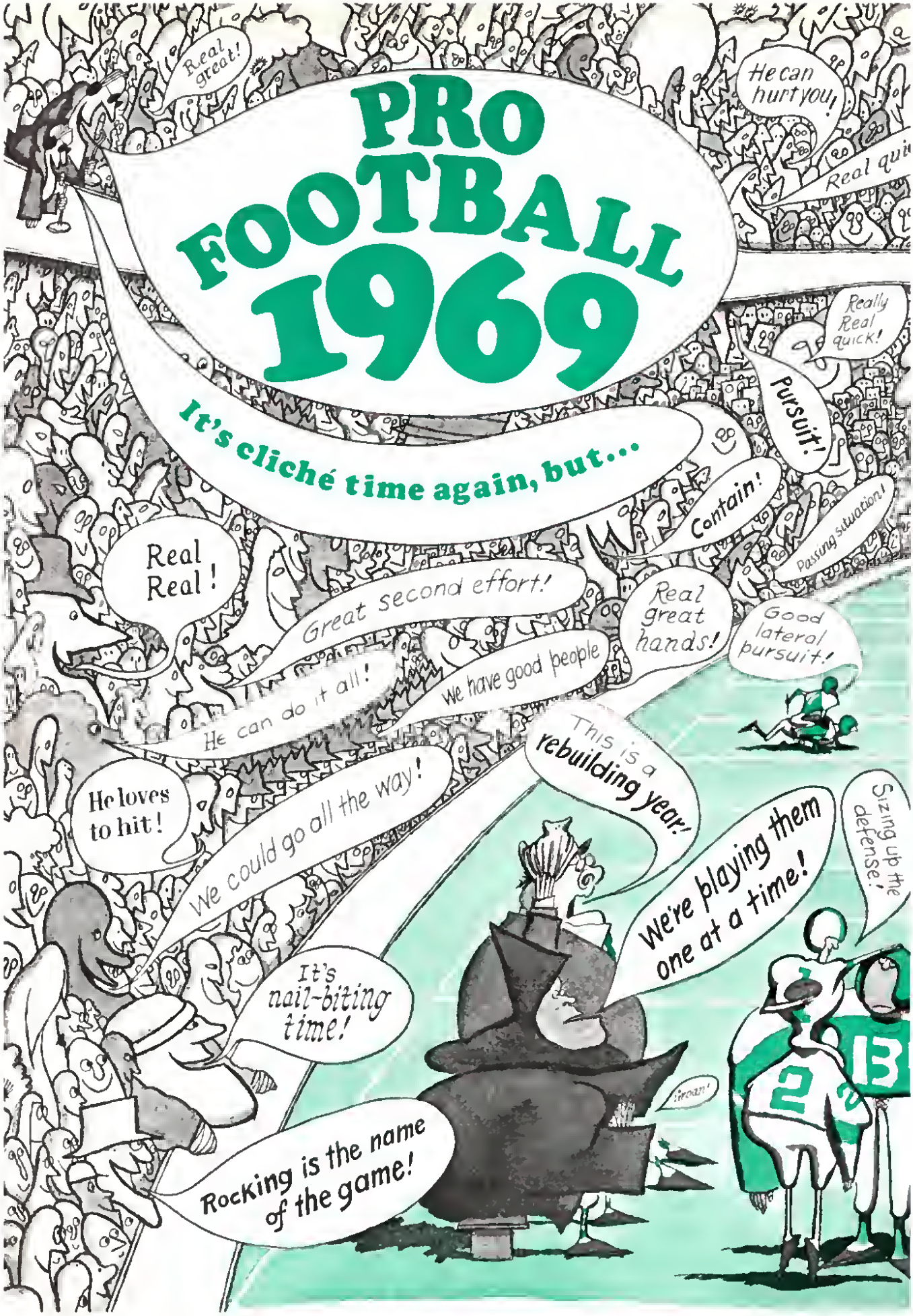
It would take them years to gain parity. They have no name players, no major cities, no experienced management personnel. In their contract talks they haven't had to pay out anything yet—it's like the Broadway show, *Promises, Promises*. As for their stealing referees, there are some I wish they had stolen a few years ago when I was in business."

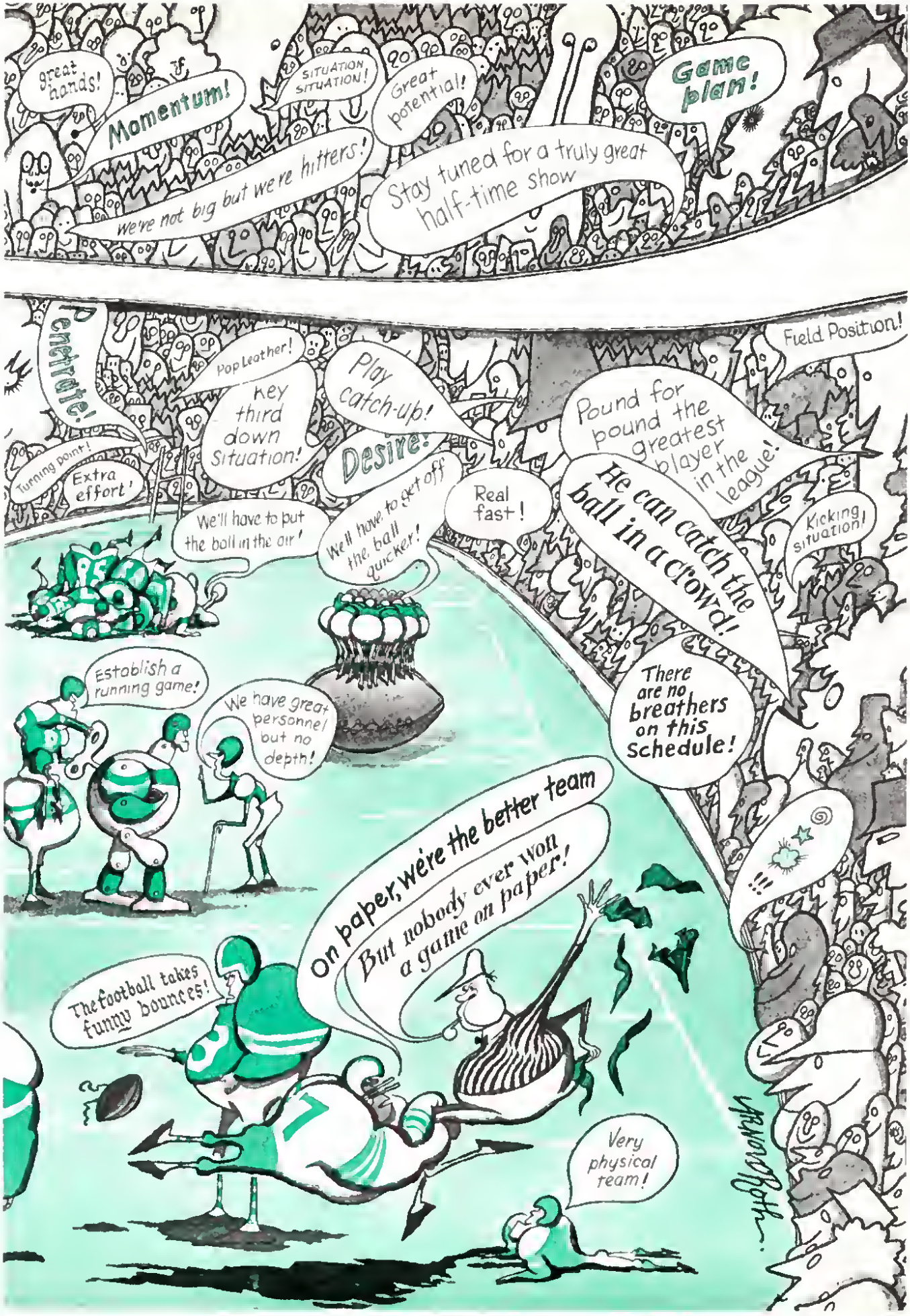
Gardner, meanwhile, was warning that at least 50 NBA players had been in contact with the ABA and that 15 to 20 were involved in "serious" negotiations. "The timing is right for us," he said. "Next year we will have a shot at 20 top-flight ballplayers and six superstars. We think we can get four of those superstars for one big reason: the NBA couldn't afford them 'cause it's strapped financially. Ned Irish of the Knicks told me he has players making $50,000 to $60,000 sitting on the bench, and he just can't afford a bidding war. Why stay in business, he told me, when players' salaries soak up 110% of the gate? On the other hand, our people can afford one year of aggressive bidding—and most of them are willing to do it. Our money will be on the table next spring. If Mount and Maravich and Murphy don't pick it up, then it will be there the year after and the year after that—or until somebody is smart enough to take it."

"Before they will consider merging with us," says Walter Kennedy, "the ABA people say they want the first six choices in next year's draft, plus half of our existing TV contract—out of which they will pay their indemnity. Well, those demands are foolish. I repeat: there will be no merger with the ABA *in the foreseeable future*. And as for all this stuff about NBA owners being unable to afford a bidding war, that's nonsense. We have always paid top dollar for our talent and will continue to do so.

"Several years ago the NBA said there was room and talent in this country for 20 professional basketball teams. We still believe that, and whether or not those 20 teams are achieved through expansion or merger with some other professional league remains to be seen."

With this mood prevailing on both sides, and the fury of battle taking possession of the protagonists, the prospects of peace are no better than they were when the guns of August 1914 opened fire. **END**


PRO FOOTBALL 1969
It's cliché time again, but...
Real great!
He can hurt you!
Real quick!
Really Real quick!
Pursuit!
Contain!
Passing situation!
Real Real!
Great second effort!
He can do it all!
We have good people
Real great hands!
Good lateral pursuit!
He loves to hit!
We could go all the way!
This is a rebuilding year!
We're playing them one at a time!
Sizing up the defense!
It's nail-biting time!
Rocking is the name of the game!
Uhoan!


great hands!
Momentum!
SITUATION SITUATION!
Great potential!
Game plan!
We're not big but we're hitters!
Stay tuned for a truly great half-time show
Concentrate!
Pop Leather!
Key third down Situation!
Play catch-up!
Desire!
Field Position!
Pound for pound the greatest player in the league!
Turning point!
Extra effort!
We'll have to put the ball in the air!
We'll have to get off the ball quicker!
Real fast!
He can catch the ball in a crowd!
Kicking situation!
Establish a running game!
We have great personnel but no depth!
There are no breathers on this schedule!
!!!
On paper, we're the better team
But nobody ever won a game on paper!
The football takes funny bounces!
Very physical team!
Howard Roth

. . . as you get triter, you often get righter

by Tex Maule

The 51st year of the given Sunday is upon us (1969 marks the 50th anniversary of the NFL). As usual it is bedecked in its autumnal regalia of sere clichés, and the stereotype is once more heard in the land—from the followers of the purple pros of Minnesota to the diehards who watch the New Orleans Saints go stumbling out.

The clichés of professional football have become clichés because, like most, they are often true. For example, this year, with talent thinly spread over 26 rosters, it is probably truer than ever that on any given Sunday any team in either league can beat any other. Didn't the Jets prove that for all time in the Super Bowl?

It's true, too, that pro football is a sport that has captured the imagination of the populace. This has been happening for a long time, but the Jets' win in the Super Bowl seemed to crystallize the game's enormous appeal.

While college football is—and will always be—an immensely attractive sport, it hasn't participated in the burgeoning popularity that marks pro football. Interest in the college game is mostly parochial—the old grads of Siwash U and the inhabitants of the area dominated by Siwash are rabid fans, but, when you cross the county line into Backwater State territory, the people couldn't care less about Siwash. It's hard for a college to build a large national following because the players keep coming and going. In a three-year career a Joe Namath spends a year or two making a reputation, capitalizes on it as a senior and then takes his reputation and talent to a pro club, where he may stay 10 years or more.

And the college game isn't nearly as proficient. College offenses and defenses are built to minimize flaws. Unlike the pros, no college team has superb athletes at every position, so the coach must disguise his weaknesses as best he can and teach physical skills, not strategy and tactics.

Once in a long while a sporting event becomes transcendent, universal. This occurs most often when well-ballyhooed heavyweights fight for the championship. The Cassius Clay-Sonny Liston fights were two of the most melodramatic confrontations, not only in sport but in the larger realm of what might be called pop history—that is, until last Jan. 12.

The Super Bowl summed up the temper of the times. The best of the mod, mod world, in the hairy, slouching person of nonconforming Joe Namath, took on the Establishment, as typified by the Baltimore Colts, and put it down in a game that was, in a word, hallucinogenic—to everyone over 30. Namath and the Jets struck a resounding blow for youth and, if you will, disrespect, and the excitement they generated carried over to this summer. It was reflected in the extraordinary interest shown in the preseason games.

In July, in Green Bay, 41,000 willingly paid a buck a head to watch the Packers scrimmage the Packers. Early in August, in San Diego, an SRO crowd of 52,171, which paid $264,342, saw the Chargers lose to the Colts in a game that was of no importance except to the coaches of the two teams, who were evaluating their personnel. A week later 87,381 watched the Rams defeat the Cowboys in the Coliseum under the same conditions. The last two games were typical of preseason play—preseason because Pete Rozelle has decreed that these contests, whose outcomes are meaningless, may not be called exhibitions.

In no other sport do so many pay so much for so little. Baseball puts on its Grapefruit and Cactus League games in ramshackle ball parks before a handful of senior citizens and bemused tourists wearing Bermuda shorts, socks with clocks and dress shoes, who pay reduced admissions. Basketball and hockey exhibitions are played in places like Camden, N.J. and Rimouski, Quebec where crowds ranging from 2,500 to 7,000 fork out $1 to $4 to gawk. Only football showcases its preseason games at regular-season prices in NFL and AFL cities and draws full houses for penny-ante shows.

Why? It is a near-cliche to say we live in an hysterical age, and pro football is a near-hysterical sport. But it's nearly the case. Pro football's format—bursts of extreme emotion, followed by a reasonable time to savor the action—is ideal. Basketball, on the other hand, is almost as intense but, when a shot is made, the spectator has little time to appreciate what he has seen; the ball is put in play immediately and, as basket follows basket, insensibility begins to set in. Baseball is slow and intellectual, hockey fast and esoteric.

There are a number of other things that make professional football a true extension of the modern American character. Ours is a civilization dominated by technology and its jargon. When we send men to the moon, they communicate back to earth in a language peculiar to extraterrestrial exploration. Sociologists, psychoanalysts, computer programmers—all the witch doctors of the concrete jungle—speak a language that nobody but other sociologists, psychoanalysts and computer programmers can fully comprehend.

Pro football also has a special vocabulary—and it, too, produces a sense of superiority. A pro football fan who can identify a flexed tackle is not unlike a diner who reads a French menu and knows without prompting what *quiche Lorraine* should be.

Indeed, terminology has had a great deal to do with pro football's success. A maneuver as simple as rushing linebackers across the line of scrimmage be-

comes infinitely more fascinating when you call it red-dogging or blitzing. If what a spread end or a flanker does when he cuts back to the middle of the line to knock down a linebacker on a running play were called a return block, no one would get very excited. But a crackback block has verbal as well as physical impact, and if you recognize the term you feel as though you belong to the *cognoscenti*.

Even if you don't know precisely what a revolving defense or an overshifted line is, the terms themselves create a sort of mystique that grows from year to year, so that the fan always has new terms to assimilate, use, show off. Turnover (a term that pro football appropriated from basketball, where it gained currency circa 1960) is very big this year, and quarterbacks are no longer dumped by the pass rush—they are sacked.

This year, too, the Cowboys will play one of their defensive tackles back off the scrimmage line, to make it a bit more difficult for the offensive lineman to find him. This means that the tackle, instead of lining up as close to the lateral position of the ball as possible, will drop back a yard, giving himself a longer route to the quarterback and the blocker a longer, more devious route to the tackle. Dallas Coach Tom Landry calls this man the flexed tackle. If you call him the tackle a yard back, everyone would know who he is and where he plays—but if you can sneak flexed tackle into a conversation you are very definitely in and eligible for your Pete Rozelle secret decoding ring.

It's not so easy to be an expert on hockey, basketball or baseball. Few comprehend the mysteries of icing the puck, the offside rule and the intricacies of attack in hockey, the subtleties of offense and defense in basketball or the tactical odds in baseball. But almost every pro football fan—with the exception of some women—knows that on third and eight you can expect a pass and that on third and two most teams run. Many fans also know that on third and two on his own 40 Bart Starr is very likely to fake the run and throw a long pass. Few moments are more satisfying than the one that comes just after you have told your companion, "Starr's going to throw a play-action pass," and he does.

Finally, pro football gives us heroes, knights in armor that emphasizes their size and virility and conceals any frailty of countenance. Baseball players dress like little kids, basketball players look like they're wearing their underwear and hockey players resemble those mad old ladies who carry 14 shopping bags and wear 18 sweaters.

But a football player, arrayed in his helmet, face mask, shoulder pads, hip pads, rib pads, thigh pads and hand bandages, has obviously girded himself for battle, but perhaps one in an older, more gallant and glorious mode: for instance, that of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight rather than Hamburger Hill. And since war is certainly human, any war game is a welcome release to the species—particularly to Americans, that violent subspecies.

It is a psychological cliché that the little wars on Sunday assuage the aggressions of the people who watch them—but, again, no less an authority than Konrad Lorenz sees sport as man's salvation. In the last three years the little preseason wars have achieved exaggerated importance because they've matched two leagues—two nations—and have involved the fans—their inhabitants—in close and continuing argument. No more. Next season comes the merger of the NFL and the AFL, and in many respects it is unwelcome.

It took the AFL a long time to catch up. In 1960, when the league was founded, most experts believed that if it could survive for six seasons it would be on a par with the NFL. In fact, it took the AFL more than eight years. As of now there are only five teams in the new league which could compete, Sunday after Sunday, in any NFL division—the Jets, the Chiefs, the Raiders, the Chargers and the Oilers. If any other AFL club were put in an NFL division it would almost surely finish last.

But AFL adherents will never concede this. They are, resolutely, proponents of the territorial imperative and are fanatic in the protection of the restricted area in which they dwell—and root. If professional football has made a mistake in the last decade, it may well be the merger. The Super Bowl will be an immensely exciting game again next year because it will match the champion of the AFL with the champion of the NFL. In 1971, when the pro football world is no longer divided into two vigorously warring camps, the Super Bowl may be an anticlimax.

In 1970, three NFL clubs will be playing in what was the AFL—Cleveland, Baltimore and Pittsburgh. Cleveland and Pittsburgh will be in one division, Baltimore in another, so Baltimore and Cleveland could play for what amounts to the AFL championship. If so, the fanatics who buy the season tickets in the AFL and who abhor the NFL will be upset. And even NFL fans will feel cheated.

As the cliché has it, they should have let well enough alone.

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MAULE'S PICKS

NFL

COASTAL
Baltimore Colts

CENTURY
St. Louis Cardinals

CENTRAL
Green Bay Packers

CAPITOL
Dallas Cowboys

AFL

EAST
New York Jets

WEST
Kansas City Chiefs

AFL EAST

The best (New York) is better, and the second best (Houston) is more better, but the Oilers still aren't in a class with the Jets, of whom the classiest are W. White Shoes and Mathews Snell.

Just as momentum seems to shift in a given football game, a broader current works within teams, divisions and conferences. Along those lines, the AFL's Eastern Conference is now on the upswing. Led by the New York Jets, who are at or near the top of their cycle, the AFL East this year counts two superior teams (New York and Houston), two others well on the way up from their nadirs (Buffalo and Miami) and a fifth that is just beginning to move after two years of stagnation (yep, Boston).

Though the AFL West is still stronger on balance, the East can—and will—give it a run for the league money. And both conferences—preseason records notwithstanding—are as rough, if not as deep, as their NFL rivals.

Consider the Jets. A fluke, among other things, is a part of the tail of a whale. Don't mention the word around Shea Stadium or you'll end up like Captain Ahab. New York's is a sound, deep team that responds to challenge, this year as last, with the élan of the good, quick winners and the turn-it-on, turn-it-off control that self-confidence breeds. A team of truly big men (the interior of the offensive line averages 261 pounds), the Jets are slow to warm up but have an almost mystical ability to win, often in the nick of time, big games. The players speak unabashedly about a "family" feeling among themselves, and they are as good as their word: perhaps no team in either league is more "together." In fact, Pete Rozelle may have done the Jets a priceless favor with his Bachelors *III* edict. The thought of no more Namath annealed the Jets more effectively than any victory.

Don't doubt it: the Jets are stronger this year than last. Namath is throwing often and accurately to a splendid array of wide receivers, most notably George Sauer Jr. and Don Maynard. According to Larry Wilson, St. Louis' very tough free safety, no one hits harder than Matt Snell, and only Gale Sayers runs better. Wilson should know. In an exhibition game he planted himself to tackle the rambling Snell. Snell dipped a shoulder and bowled Wilson over, and you can count the times *that's* happened. Snell's running mate, Emerson Boozer, hasn't been picking up the yardage he did before his knee injury in 1967, but he's doing some staunch, if unheralded, blocking for Snell and White Shoes. The Jets' rushers also include Bill Mathis, who retired briefly before coming back more as a talisman than a threat, and young, 6′4″, 240-pound Lee White, nicely healed from knee surgery and plowing just as nicely up the middle.

The offensive line lost the third guard, Bob Talamini (a 1968 inspirational acquisition), but the guard situation is O.K. if Dave Herman isn't needed to supplant Sam Walton at tackle, where Herman started in the Super Bowl. Since Coach Weeb Ewbank would prefer switching Herman back to guard, his first draft choice was Offensive Tackle Dave Foley of Ohio State, but Ewbank will have to go with Walton as Foley suffered torn knee ligaments against Buffalo and will be out for the year.

No More Yuks

Ewbank's biggest problem is at cornerback. Johnny Sample was cut (along with his loud mouth, which spoke both for the players during the Namath Crisis and too often on the playing field) to be replaced by quick-study Cornell Gordon. Randy Beverly, who intercepted two passes in the Super Bowl, has con-

tinued to shine in the exhibition season, but after Gordon and Beverly—help! Safety Jim Hudson stands firm. He's the guy who covered Baltimore's John Mackey "like a cheap suit," as one Jet gleefully recalls it. Ewbank may have lowered morale on the specialty teams by letting popular Punter Curley Johnson go, but as Ewbank said, "I can't lead with my heart." Johnson has been replaced by rookie Steve O'Neal of Texas A&M, whose 22 punts in the exhibition season were returned for less than 32 yards. However, another well-regarded kicker, a guy named Jim Turner, is still around. Ewbank made no mistake in letting Kick Returner Earl Christy go in favor of No. 12 draft choice Mike Battle, one tough, flaky, glass-eating kid out of USC. But the linebacking is shaky with Ralph Baker out for a month and Al Atkinson nursing a sprained knee.

Better and Betterer

If the Jets look better this year than last, the Houston Oilers look relatively betterer. Most of the ills that football flesh is heir to beset the Oilers last season, ranging from Quarterback Pete Beathard's appendicitis to Wide Receiver Rich Stebbins' service call-up. This year both are back and vital. Beathard, in his sixth season, has the stuff of a big year in him, as Bobby Layne remarked during a training camp stint. "Pete has the potential," said Layne, who has learned a word or two since leaving Pittsburgh. In case Pete doesn't become actual, Coach Wally Lemm can call on Bob Davis of Virginia, a third-year man, and Don Trull, an on/off Oiler reacquired last year after having been cut by Boston—yes, Boston.

If Beathard survives, he has a bevy of receivers to keep him in business. Stebbins (who ran second to Bob Hayes on his world-record 100-yard-dash day) is complemented by Tight End Alvin Reed (46 catches last year, one short of a league record for the position), second-year men Mac Haik and Jim Beirne and a couple of impressive rookies. SMU's runty (5'10") Jerry Levias and Grambling's Charlie Joiner are both quick and grabby, and Levias has already established himself as the team's premier punt returner. Another valuable rookie is Kicker Roy Gerela, a soccer-style Canadian who also punts. His accuracy is a boon, since the Oilers hit on only 12 of 29 field goals last year. And his specialty is *boom!* In his last year at New Mexico State only 18 of his 47 kickoffs were returned.

Houston's excellent offensive line is second only to its defense, which finished behind New York by 12 yards last season. All-AFL Linebacker George Webster and End Elvin Bethea are the standouts, along with All-League Cornerback Miller Farr. Though the Oilers were stunned when Cornerback Leroy Mitchell cracked a neck vertebra in camp, a cat named Zeke Moore from Lincoln University is filling the spot adequately.

Buffalo, by contrast, is coming out of two years of decay with the vitality of rampant fungus. Coach Johnny Rauch is taking his first season very seriously. Working with spotty material, he has the Bills in fine early season shape. Most important, he has scrapped the grind-it-out ground game that dates from Cookie Gilchrist's day in favor of a wide-open offense, replete with slots and swings that can set O. J. Simpson, Wide Receiver Haven Moses or even rookie Fullback Bill Enyart man-to-man on linebackers or safeties. O.J., of course, is the most closely watched train on the Buffalo track, but Enyart gives the Bills a head-on game that will free Simpson for end runs and passes. (And don't forget Ben Gregory, the team's leading rusher until he suffered a knee injury in midseason. Gregory could be back by late October.) Another fine rookie prospect is Jim Harris, a black quarterback from Grambling who can zap the soul out of a receiver with his strong arm. Rauch isn't using Harris as part of any social experiment: he is a legitimate quarterback with a fine head and he started last week against the Jets. Harris' relief is Jack Kemp, who didn't play in 1968, and Tom Flores. Quarterbacking was the Bills' sorest spot last year. Kemp, of course, hurt his knee in a scrimmage a week before the season opener (a weird, punitive measure on the part of ex-Coach Joe Collier), and by November, Buffalo was down to its fifth-string quarterback, Wide Receiver Ed Rutkowski, throwing from a shotgun in a snowstorm.

Secondary Flambé

With all that new talent, Buffalo is still weak on the offensive line and inconsistent in placekicking (Bruce Alford can't hit much beyond 40 yards). The Bills can pressure the passer and stop the sweep most of the time, but their defenders remain highly flammable on the deep patterns.

Despite losing five of six exhibition games, Miami should have a year in keeping with its three-year performance as an expansion team (12-29-1, best anywhere since football began growing). Quarterback Bob Griese seems about ready to live down Johnny Unitas' jinx; Unitas once called him "the best young quarterback in the game." Griese has the arm plus steady runners in Jim (Quick) Kiick and Larry (Zonker) Csonka. Unfortunately, Csonka has been zonked too often and is out for a month to let his head stop ringing, and Griese doesn't have an offensive line (two regulars are sidelined until October with ruptured knee ligaments), so he has been obliged to concentrate on throwing to his running backs.

The word on Miami's cornerbacks ("Pass on Westmoreland and run at Warren") is widespread but remediable, if Coach George Wilson can find the combination. There is a lot of depth in the defensive line, which, if properly applied in a strong pass rush, could relieve some of the pressure on the secondary. Safeties Dick Anderson and Bob Petrella are tough enough, and Middle Linebacker Nick Buoniconti, picked up from Boston, is an old shrewdie. The main thing about the Dolphins is a new sense of unity. After a brawl erupted in an exhibition game with Chicago, both benches emptied in a hurry. The Dolphins proudly point out that their bench emptied first.

And that leaves Boston. "We're not a good team," says the Patriots' new coach, Clive (pronounced Cleeve) Rush, formerly the offensive backfield coach of the Jets and a man given to blunt phrases. He adds, "Seven wins in two seasons is not a good record."

It won't be much better this year. Fullback Jim Nance, Defensive End Larry Eisenhauer, Tight End Jim Whalen and Defensive Tackle Houston Antwine are the only standouts, and the first two are recovering from injuries. But a new strength is aborning, if only the strength of transition. Quarterback Mike Taliaferro seems to have blossomed under Rush and the Jets' system, and, as one veteran says of Rush, "After seeing this man operate, we feel like we've been cheated all these years." The only reason the player wouldn't permit his name to be used is because Rush has forbidden any rap against the former regime. That's a good way to begin.

CONTINUED

AFL WEST

Kansas City, Oakland and San Diego are like three lobsters in a trap—anly ane can survive. If the Chiefs avoid the injuries which devastated them last year, they'll be that one.

Hank Stram of the Kansas City Chiefs and Sid Gillman of the San Diego Chargers are unique in pro football. Each has been his team's only head coach. They took over at the formation of the AFL in 1960 and have endured through thick and thin, but mostly thick.

The Chiefs and the Chargers are perennial contenders for the AFL title, and no doubt the continuity of command has had a good deal to do with this. (Or, vice versa, if they hadn't been contenders, the command wouldn't have been so continuous.) At Oakland, the other Western power, the continuity is on a higher level—Managing General Partner Al Davis, once the Raiders' coach, still spends a lot of time peering over the head coach's shoulder. He breathed so heavily on the neck of John Rauch, who took the Raiders to the conference title last year, that Rauch went to the Buffalo Bills.

At Cincinnati, the head coach is Paul Brown, who, win, lose or tie, will last as long as he wants to—he is also one of the owners. The head coach of the Denver Broncos is Lou Saban, back for his third year of sufferance. But the strength in the West is undeniably Kansas City, Oakland and San Diego, and there is little to choose among them.

When Lamar Hunt formed the Chiefs (as the Dallas Texans), he immediately hired Stram, and Hank has done a remarkable job. He is one of the real innovators in pro football. It was Stram who invented the "moving pocket" for his quarterbacks, inhibiting the pass rush, and he came up with the "stack" defense to make his linebackers hard to find. More recently he has used the Tight End I, an attack which puts the tight end in the backfield before the snap, so he can shift out of the I into a variety of sets designed to confuse the pass defenders.

Last season the Chiefs probably were as hard hit by injuries as any team and still managed to tie for the regular-season lead in the West. They lost to Oakland in a playoff, but this year, with the old injuries healed, save for Ernie Ladd's knee (and despite a new injury to Tight End Reg Carolan, who is probably out for the season and has been replaced by Fred Arbanas), and with some help from the draft, it looks like the Chiefs will win without a playoff.

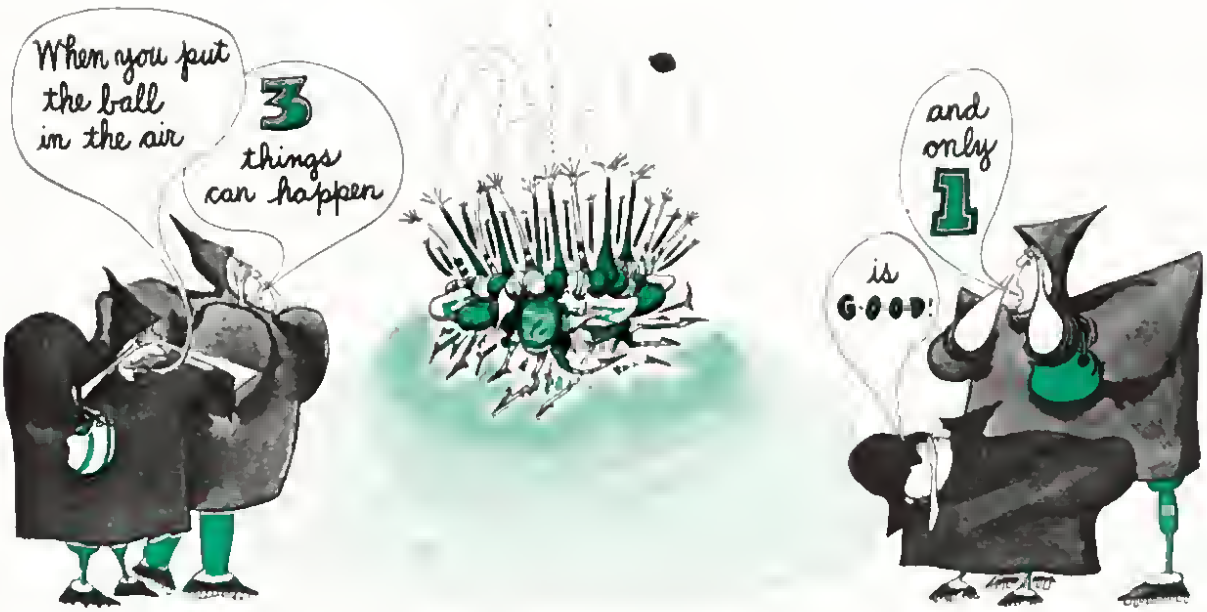
Stram has an excellent quarterback to operate his varied attack in Len Dawson, who appears to be at his peak at 34. Dawson has had a history of early season sore arms, but he claims off-season exercise has cured that; indeed, he has thrown extremely well in the exhibitions. Since he led the AFL in passing last year, Dawson's sound right arm is essential to the Chiefs' attack.

Dawson will be operating behind an offensive line which will be better this year. It better be. His receivers—notably Otis Taylor, who gained 1,297 yards on 58 catches in 1966 when the Chiefs won the AFL title, but was hobbled by a groin injury last year—are tops. "Taylor is a key man," Stram says, but if Taylor is a bit off, the Chiefs have Frank Pitts (no kin to the Packers' Elijah) and Gloster Richardson (brother of the Colts' Willie).

Sound on the Ground

Mike Garrett, the 1965 Heisman Trophy winner, heads a corps of brilliant runners. Garrett came to camp 10 pounds lighter this year and seems faster. Stumpy Robert Holmes, runner-up to Cincinnati's Paul Robinson as Rookie of the Year in 1968, was the second leading rusher in the AFL.

When the Chiefs stumbled in 1968, it was due to defensive difficulties, mostly



in the secondary. Although Ladd will be sitting out the season, the front line, with Jerry Mays at end and Buck Buchanan at tackle, remains massive and mobile and is, if anything, stiffened by the development of Aaron Brown.

The core of the defense, though, is Stram's linebacking crew. Bobby Bell is All-AFL on the left side, and he has redoubtable colleagues. Willie Lanier, the middlebacker, was also All-AFL, and Jim Lynch is no slouch on the other side. The trio played together regularly for the first time in 1968, so it should be more effective this season, especially on blitzes.

The Kansas City secondary is still in a state of flux, but with the line and linebackers putting pressure on the passer, it should be able to do the job. If rookie James Marsalis, a first draft choice from Tennessee State, is as for real as he looked against Don Maynard in the Jets-All-Star game, it should do a *good* job. Stram has said the Chiefs will be better this year, and last year they were 12 and 2. Says Lanier, "If 12-2 won't win it, we're going to be shooting for 13-1."

Prime and Past It

Since the Oakland Raiders were also 12-2 and won the playoff, it may take 13-1. The Raiders certainly have as much talent as any AFL team. They have a fine quarterback in his prime in Daryle Lamonica (and a fine one past his prime in 41-year-old George Blanda), peerless receivers in Fred Biletnikoff, Warren Wells and Billy Cannon, a full complement of running backs who supply size (Hewritt Dixon), speed (Charlie Smith) and mobility plus speed (Larry Todd and Pete Banaszak). If the Oakland ground game falters it will be because of inconsistent blocking. Guard Gene Upshaw is among the best in the league, but the other guard, Wayne Hawkins, has had knee trouble. The offensive line, headed by Center Jim Otto, in his 10th pro season and his eighth as All-AFL, is solid.

On defense, Tom Keating, a stick-out at tackle in 1967, is trying to come back from an Achilles' tendon injury, which kept him out in 1968 (the Raiders took defensive linemen on two of their first four draft picks). The linebackers—Dan Connors in the middle and Gus Otto and Chip Oliver on the corners—contributed much to Oakland leading the league in sacking passers (49 times), but Bill Laskey, a 1967 starter who was injured last year, may break into this formidable group.

In the secondary, Head Coach John Madden may have the best set of five in the AFL. Free Safety David Grayson led the AFL in interceptions (10) last year, Willie Brown and Kent McCloughan on the corners have both been all-league choices, and when McCloughan was injured last season, George Atkinson filled in and shared Defensive Rookie of the Year honors with Dick Anderson, the Miami safety. Strong safety may be the weakest link now that Rodger Bird is on the injured waived list.

For the past three years the San Diego Chargers have finished third behind Oakland and Kansas City, but Sid Gillman feels this may be the year he moves up. "We've been getting a little better each year," he says. "I think this is the best team I've had in a long time."

The Chargers have been consistently potent on attack, leading the league in pass offense in 1968 and finishing second to Oakland in overall offense. The offensive line tied with New York as the best in the AFL at protecting the passer, John Hadl and his understudies being sacked only 18 times. With this safe haven to throw from, Hadl set team records in yards gained, touchdown passes—and, inexplicably, interceptions.

But the Chargers suffered on defense, and it is this unit which Gillman has shored up. Since shoddy play by the linebackers contributed much to the Chargers' having the sixth best (or fourth worst) defense in the AFL, one of Gillman's two first draft choices was Bob Babich, a linebacker from Miami of Ohio (the other was Columbia Quarterback Marty Domres), and he obtained Linebacker Pete Barnes from the Houston Oilers for a fourth draft choice. But Babich will be out for the season with a knee injury, and Rick Redman, who sat out last season with the same thing, will start in the middle as he did in '67. Jeff Staggs will play on the left side.

The Charger defensive line has been tough on the run but slow to reach the passer, contributing to San Diego's vulnerability to the pass. The line is intact, save for Tackle Scott Appleton, who had a team high (for linemen) of 53 unassisted tackles last year. Appleton, who had apparently lost his job to Houston Ridge, "cut" himself. The hard-worked secondary is led by second team All-AFL Strong Safety Kenny Graham.

On offense, Gillman has Lance Alworth and Gary Garrison. Add powerful tight ends and depth and it is obvious why the Chargers have an extraordinary passing attack. The runners are big (with the exception of 5' 9" Dickie Post) and speedy, and the development of rookies Ron Sayers (Gale's brother) and Jeff Queen adds further potency. If the defense holds up, the Chargers may move up. They certainly won't move down.

A Lot of Bad Breaks

Denver and Cincinnati, the fourth and fifth teams in the West last year, won only eight games between them, and none against the first three. It seems unlikely they will better that record this year. Oh, those busted Broncos! In one week they lost four men with torn right knee ligaments, but so far they've avoided the plague of broken collarbones which cost them their No. 1 quarterback, Steve Tensi, and No. 1 receiver, Al Denson, for most of last season. Other injuries chopped up their offensive unit, forcing the defense to play 60% to 70% of each game, and with rookies sprinkled in the secondary, Denver led the league in pass yardage given up. Moreover, the linebackers didn't once get to the passer on a blitz.

The quarterbacking should be superior to last year. Tensi's collarbone has knit, and Saban has added reserve strength in Pete Liske, a four-year veteran from the Canadian League. Tom Smiley, a big fullback acquired from Cincinnati, is a fine blocker and will give Floyd Little some help carrying the ball.

Paul Brown, in the second season at Cincinnati, needs all the help he can get. In 1968 Brown did very well to win three games with castoffs and rookies. And he found several nuggets. Running Back Paul Robinson, who gained 1,023 yards and made Rookie of the Year, Center Bob Johnson and Bill Staley, a defensive tackle.

"But," as Brown says, "we have to have more early picks to build up. You can't hurry it. The other clubs have improved, too. We may not win as many this year as last."

Greg Cook, the Cincinnati University quarterback who shone in the All-Star game, could be a 1969 find, as could Bill Bergey at middle linebacker. But the Bengals, with six rookie draft choices starting, will have to depend for victories on Brown's brain.

CONTINUED

NFL COASTAL

Love, hate and talent contribute to making a football team, but talent contributes most, and with the Colts, Rams and 49er's the Coastal has all kinds of talent. Pity the Falcons

Professional football, as the cliche has it, is an emotional game. No less an authority than Vince Lombardi once said that the success of the Green Bay Packers was built on love. While much of that success could be realistically attributed to spirited blocking and tackling by a large group of very talented players, Vince could make a persuasive case for the value of team affection—and fear.

In the Coastal Division of the NFL, love, hate and talent abound, but mostly talent. Three of the teams—the Los Angeles Rams, Baltimore Colts and San Francisco 49ers—would probably be favored to win in either the Century or Capitol divisions. The fourth—the Atlanta Falcons—may be ready to give the Big Three a game now and then.

The success of all four teams will depend upon how they handle a variety of psychological problems. The defending-champion Colts are recovering from the trauma of losing to the New York Jets in the Super Bowl. The Rams saw their coach melodramatically fired and rehired during the off season. The 49ers are still adjusting to the tough regime of Dick Nolan, in his second season as head coach, and the Falcons are now under the driving—and often caustic—direction of Norm Van Brocklin, in his first full season.

The Colts probably will make the easiest adjustment. Don Shula, after six years as coach, has established a firm rapport with his players, based on mutual admiration and respect. He is a young man (39) and he seems to have an instinctive appreciation of the attitudes and hang-ups of his club. He may even turn the loss to the Jets to good account in the season to come.

For example, half a dozen Colt veterans came to training camp with the rookies—a week before they had to. "A winning team has to worry about what you call complacency," Shula said then. "Winning becomes a habit. You take it for granted. That's why it is gratifying to me to see veterans like John Mackey [an All-Pro tight end], Willie Richardson and Bubba Smith show up early. It means we have a goal that is spurring them."

The return to action of a healthy John Unitas also helps spur the Colts. Earl Morrall did a fine job of replacing Johnny U. in 1968, but it is doubtful that he will be able to supplant a fit Unitas, who exercises the charismatic authority that all great quarterbacks have, and whose arm, through the preseason games, seemed better than ever.

Says Jimmy Orr, the veteran wide receiver: "If he threw any better—and I have been catching him for eight seasons—they would have to outlaw him. He can still do something most passers fail at. That is, throw while you're coming open, with two steps to go, so the ball gets to you in the clear."

With either Unitas or Morrall at quarterback, the Colts will have a versatile, high-scoring attack. They have a strong, fast corps of receivers, headed by Richardson, Mackey and Orr, and a veteran offensive line to protect the quarterbacks. The running backs—Tom Matte, Jerry Hill and Terry Cole—are tough if not fleet and give the Colts a solid ground game.

An Iffy Defense

If Baltimore falters it could be because of a drop-off in defense. Although the Colts allowed the fewest points in the NFL last season, they have had two crucial retirements. Bobby Boyd, a fixture at cornerback on All-Pro teams, has become a Colt coach, and Defensive Captain Ordell Braase has retired at end. Charlie Stukes, a third year man, will replace Boyd, and veteran Roy Hilton is taking over for Braase, but the Colts will need a strong pass rush—which final-

ly materialized in an exhibition against Buffalo—and fine play from their linebackers to help out the corners.

Fortunately for Baltimore, the major soft spot of the principal contenders in the Coastal Division is at wide receiver, the attacking point against cornerbacks. The Rams have improved appreciably by judicious trading and the acquisition of three good first draft choices, but Coach George Allen is still thin at the flanks. Bernie Casey, a notably underrated wide receiver, has retired to paint and write poetry, and Jim Seymour, a No. 1 draft choice from Notre Dame, was called to active duty with the National Guard and may miss the entire season. Wendell Tucker, who backed up Casey in 1968, is fast and has good moves and hands, but he is 5'11", 185. Veterans Jack Snow and Pat Studstill could be the answer, if Snow plays as he did in 1967 and Studstill can avoid injury.

Utilizing Emotion

The Rams' only other major problem is to put to good use the emotional binge brought on by the firing of Allen, the threat by a group of players led by All-Pros Deacon Jones and Merlin Olsen to quit if Allen wasn't reinstated, and the grand rehiring. "I think the whole thing has brought us closer together," Allen said at training camp. He is a small, enthusiastic man with a strong empathy with his players, and he is probably as well liked and deeply respected by his players as any coach. "I know I now have a much warmer, deeper feeling for this team than any I have ever known," he went on. "And I think the players feel that way about me."

Probably the most helpful trade Allen made on his return was the acquisition of Offensive Tackle Bob Brown from the Philadelphia Eagles. Brown, who will be playing at a svelte 278 (he once went over 300), may be the best there is; certainly he adds enormous blocking strength to what was already a good offensive line. Says Brown: "I figure there isn't anybody in this business I can't block. The way I look at it, there's $25,000 at stake for an afternoon's work in the Super Bowl. I'd block King Kong all afternoon for that." This blocking power could animate a running attack which has been hampered by injuries. Much of the long-run potential of the Rams depends on the health of Les Josephson, who sat out last season with a torn Achilles' tendon, on the development of young Willie Ellison and the indoctrination of Larry Smith, a big (6'3", 220 pounds) No. 1 draft choice from Florida. If Tommy Mason can rally his aching legs and Dick Bass regain his form, the run will be better than it has ever been for the Rams.

Defensively, the club has always been gung-ho and grudging. The Fearsome Foursome may miss injured Lamar Lundy at defensive end early in the season, but he has a strong replacement in Gregg Schumacher. The rest of the quartet is intact, although Diron Talbert is pressing Roger Brown at right tackle. The linebackers are good, experienced and deep, and Allen improved his secondary with Jimmy Nettles, an Eagle tradee, at corner and ex-Bear Richie Petitbon at safety. Ron Smith, who started at safety last year, has moved to right cornerback.

The defense should turn over the ball to Roman Gabriel, the big quarterback, often enough, and in the last two years Gabriel has markedly improved, too, although he isn't in Unitas' class.

John Brodie, the 49er quarterback, isn't, either, but he was the third-ranked passer in the NFL in 1968 and might move up with the help of two rookies—first draft choice Ted Kwalick at tight end and speedy Gene Washington at wide receiver—and the league's leading receiver in 1968, Clifton McNeil. With a ponderous running game headed by the NFL's No. 2 ballcarrier, Ken Willard, the 49ers could be the most explosive team in the division despite their dismal exhibition-season record.

Helping will be Brodie's familiarity with the complicated offense imported from Dallas last year by Coach Nolan. "We are way ahead of where we were this time last season," Nolan said not long ago. "I was new, and I spent an awful lot of time getting things organized the way I wanted them. We had to go slow putting in offense and defense. Now the players are more familiar with the system and they have more confidence in it. We would be much better if that were the only change, but I think our personnel will be better, too."

The 49er players do exhibit a new air of confidence and determination. In past years—the club has never won a division championship—the attitude seemed almost lackadaisical, but today it is grim and businesslike. "We've never had as well-run or as tough a camp," said one veteran. "You don't mind the work when you see the results."

Brodie and Steve Spurrier, who got the backup job when George Mira was traded to Philadelphia, work behind an offensive line, most of whom have been together a long time and all of whom are good; and Nolan, a defensive coach for Dallas before coming to San Francisco, produced the best defensive record since 1961 in his first year with the 49ers. Indeed, the defensive line is second only to the Rams', the linebackers are handicapped only by a lack of range in the middle and the secondary has matured. The one weakness is a lack of reserves in the secondary and at linebacker.

Unnumbered Falcons

The 49ers have about adjusted to Nolan, but the Atlanta Falcons are just getting used to Van Brocklin. The Dutchman took over from Norb Hecker after the Falcons lost their first three games in 1968 and managed to win two of the next 11. Van Brocklin could make no sweeping changes in a system already established, but this season he brought in a new staff of assistants, and he has shuffled personnel via trade and draft and is installing a new offense and defense. "On offensive calls, we will use a verbal system rather than numbers," he says. "The quarterback spells out the whole play in the huddle, including the blocking assignments. If a guy can't remember from the huddle to the line of scrimmage, he can't play."

Van Brocklin's quarterback will be either Bob Berry, Randy Johnson or Bruce Lemmerman, who signed as a free agent last year out of San Fernando Valley State and made the highest score on the team's intelligence exams. Last year, Berry and Johnson were sacked a record 70 times, but the offensive line is improving, in an exhibition victory over Boston the Falcon quarterback wasn't sacked once.

The Falcons have running backs but need receivers; the defensive line will be better than 1968, but not good enough, and the secondary is young and porous, although Tommy Nobis, one of the three best middle backers in the league, shores up the linebackers.

If the Falcons survive Van Brocklin's rigid ways, they should win more than twice, but in a division with Baltimore, Los Angeles and San Francisco, you need more than love and hate. Atlanta will be fourth, with the talent-laden trio finishing in the above order.

CONTINUED

NFL CENTURY

The Cardinals are coming, tra la, tra la—in football. Big on running backs and helped by a little safety and a quarterback with a better head than arm, St. Louis is out to depose Cleveland

Nowhere in all of pro football does any group of teams have as long a history of frustration as the Pittsburgh Steelers, St. Louis Cardinals, New York Giants and Cleveland Browns. The Steelers have never won a championship or a conference title. The Cardinals haven't won since 1948, but they have been close so close so often that they have begun to develop a second-place complex. The Giants are mired in mediocrity, and even the Browns, who found the winning touch in 1968, are frustrated. "We all felt we should have gone to the Super Bowl," says Linebacker Jim Houston. "We've thought about it constantly since last season." The other three teams have thought about not winning at all. "We've got to win and win and win," says Steeler Receiver Roy Jefferson. "We've got to kick the losing habit and get rid of our hangup." The Giants and the Cardinals have a similar problem—no confidence. "We won four straight, and instead of sucking up our guts and toughing our way through, we worried when we'd lose," says Giant Tackle Steve Wright.

The Century could provide the tightest race in pro football, but St. Louis should take it. In 1967 the Cards were riven with racial unrest. Coach Charley Winner tore the team apart to restore order, rebuilding his defense with only a few holdovers, including Safeties Larry Wilson and Jerry Stovall, but it was worth it. "There was more togetherness last year than ever, and I'm certain it will carry over," says Halfback John Roland. Despite new personnel and players at new positions, the defense has developed into a pressing, aggressive unit. The rush line is quicker, and the linebackers have the speed to range deep against the pass. Lonnie Sanders on the right corner and Bob Atkins on the left are both very tall (6′ 3″) and very quick, and this makes them tough to beat on a race to the goal. "Sanders' trick is to play his man like the skin on a drum—tight," says Linebacker Jamie Rivers. "It's dangerous, but there's no room for the receiver to move or catch the ball." Atkins gets out of the Army this week, but the Cardinals will probably start Roger Wehrli, their No. 1 draft pick.

St. Louis has five fine running backs led by Willis Crenshaw, the seventh best rusher in the NFL, Cid Edwards, a 230-pounder who averaged 6.9 yards per carry, and Roy Shivers, who had the ball only 53 times but scored seven touchdowns. And there is MacArthur Lane, another quick, strong back, and Roland, now fully recovered from knee surgery. Passing is another story. Working behind what may be the best offensive line in the NFL, Quarterback Jim Hart ranked 14th. He was sacked only 23 times, which made him one of the most secure passers in the pros, yet he threw for a meager 15 touchdowns. Hart has still to learn the art of picking up secondary receivers. Last year Wide Receiver Dave Williams and Tight End Jackie Smith were often double-teamed, but the acquisition of Flanker John Gilliam from New Orleans should ease the coverage.

Fortunately, there's an alternative to Hart—Charley Johnson. Hart has the better arm, Johnson the better head. "The team needs a leader," a veteran says. "There's a tendency to rally to Charley." Although Johnson has trouble hitting the deep receiver, the team has such versatility that it can win without a superior quarterback. A severe loss, though, is that of Chuck Latourette, who underwent knee surgery; he was third in the league in punt returns and punting and fourth in kickoff returns.

Missed Green

The Browns are the only team in the division to be weakened instead of improved. And, for a time, it seemed they would be even weaker. Tight End Milt Morin, their second-leading receiver, was supposed to miss a few games because of a disk operation, but he's back and ready to spring Leroy Kelly loose around end and pull in the lag passes. But both Quarterback Bill Nelsen and Kelly will miss retired Fullback Ernie Green, who led most of the runs and did his share of pass blocking. Ron Johnson, the No. 1 draft choice from Michigan, probably will start alongside Kelly.

Last year Nelsen took over for Frank Ryan at quarterback and gave Cleveland the best balanced offense in the NFL. "I use all the parts," Nelsen says. "That's my forte." More important, he rallied the team after it lost confidence in Ryan, who was recently waived. But following a knee operation—his third—Nelsen is hobbling, and so is the offense. Jerry Rhome, who was picked up from Dallas, is the better passer and could get the job.

Cleveland will need some defense to stay in contention. In 1968 the Browns dumped opposing quarterbacks but 26 times, the only pressure coming from Tackle Walt Johnson. They had hoped to get more by using Bill Sabatino, a highly regarded second-year tackle, but he walked out of camp, was placed on irrevocable waivers by mistake and three teams claimed him. Two backed off when it was pointed out that to do so was a violation of a gentleman's agreement. Van Brocklin agreed he was no gentleman and took Sabatino for Atlanta. Meanwhile, End Bill Glass retired, and Tackle Jim Kanicki broke his leg and will miss seven games. The strength of the defense has come from the secondary, but Safety Ernie Kellermann has a broken thumb and Cornerback Ben Davis probably is out for the season with a torn knee cartilage, and he led the team in interceptions in 1968 with eight.

Once, during the war, when the Eagles and the Steelers were merged into what was humorously called the Steagles, Art Rooney looked down at the conglomerate that was his team and saw strange players in even stranger uniforms missing assignments and dropping balls. "They look different and they dress different," Rooney said, "but darn if they aren't the same old Steelers." Since then "Same Old Steelers" has become a rallying cry for disgruntled Pittsburgh fans. Abbreviated to SOS, the shout goes up every fall at the first hint of defeat.

Help, So No SOS

However, this season they are not the SOS. Pittsburgh drafted well and then hired Chuck Noll, the Colts' defensive coach, as head coach. Noll is soft-spoken but, as Linebacker Andy Russell explains, "You don't shut Chuck out, because he has something to say. Nothing is superfluous with him. Nothing's trite, and he doesn't use clichés." "Last year we had so many keys that we were locked in, frozen," says Middle Linebacker Ray May. "Now it's all simplified. Chuck laid it all out for us, and it's beautiful."

But then, Noll has some new beauties. In the 1969 draft the Steelers landed Joe Greene, a 270-pound All-America defensive tackle from North Texas State, and L. C. Greenwood, a tall, quick defensive end who will put zip into the rush line. Last year the deep secondary was dreadful. Not only were the defensive backs poor on coverage but they had bad hands. Indeed, one was called "Castanets." He is gone, along with Clendon Thomas, a Steeler institution but old and slow. Safety Chuck Beatty, a rookie and Greene's roommate at North Texas, is the most promising newcomer.

On offense, Terry Hanratty will back up Dick Shiner, who often throws off the wrong foot but has a lot of confidence and a good touch, and the receivers, particularly Roy Jefferson and J. R. Wilburn, rate high. However, the running is the strength of the offense. "Dick Hoak has the cleverest feet around—not fast but clever," says Jim Hamer, a former NFL official. "He picks his way through holes and goes farther than most backs can sprint." Hamer could be right, since Hoak's measured gait gained 858 yards last year. Fullback Earl Gros is like Hoak—an all-purpose back who gains the tough yards and can be counted on to wipe out the cornerback on sweeps, and the running has been further strengthened by the acquisition of Don McCall from New Orleans.

As Jefferson says, "All we need is confidence and a little luck and we'll be on our way to a new Steeler tradition."

"The difference between winning and losing is the ability to think big," Spider Lockhart, the Giants' free safety, said last month. "Until this year Allie Sherman treated us like pros, but we were up and down. All it takes to win is a little more execution, a little more toughness. Winners expect to win, and that's the way we should feel. It's a new deal with Allie. It's either produce or be gone."

The Giants haven't produced, but it's Allie who's gone. Last week, after New York lost to the Steelers 17–13, in Montreal, to complete a winless exhibition season ("How do you say 'Goodby, Allie' in French?" Sherman asked as he stepped off the plane), Allie was replaced by Alex Webster, the old Giant fullback (1955–64) who had been the club's offensive backfield coach.

The Tarkenton Generation

Allie Sherman being fired on the eve of Rosh Hashanah is like George Allen being canned the day after Christmas, but sympathy has to be extended to Webster, too. The feckless Giants are still a team that counts heavily—too heavily—on the offense that Quarterback Fran Tarkenton can generate. The offense would open up if the Giants had an outside threat, but they don't. Meanwhile, Webster must rely on Tucker Frederickson, who is relying on his scarred knees. The inside slants work well because the defenses are spread to contain Tarkenton, but Bobby Duhon, Ernie Koy and John Fuqua, a hustling rookie, aren't game breakers.

Homer Jones *is*, and this year he may have some help. Wide Receiver Don Herrmann, a 15th-round draft choice from Waynesburg (Pa.) College, has been compared by Tarkenton to Raymond Berry, and Freeman White has been shifted to his natural tight-end position after three inexplicable years on defense. The offensive line has improved at tackle, but only Pete Case is certain at guard. This could hurt on the timing of the running plays, but it has been so much a part of the Giant situation the last few years it's apt to go unnoticed.

The greatest advance is at defensive end. Bruce Anderson has switched to the left, and rookie Fred Dryer has taken over the right side. "Dryer is an animal and the best-looking defensive end that I've seen since Carl Eller came into the league," says Tarkenton. Outside pressure is something the Giant defense hasn't had since Andy Robustelli's prime, and it could be the most significant improvement in a defense which has a powerful secondary but a linebacking corps that is always changing and "improving" but never seems to get any better. This, alas, sums up the ball club.

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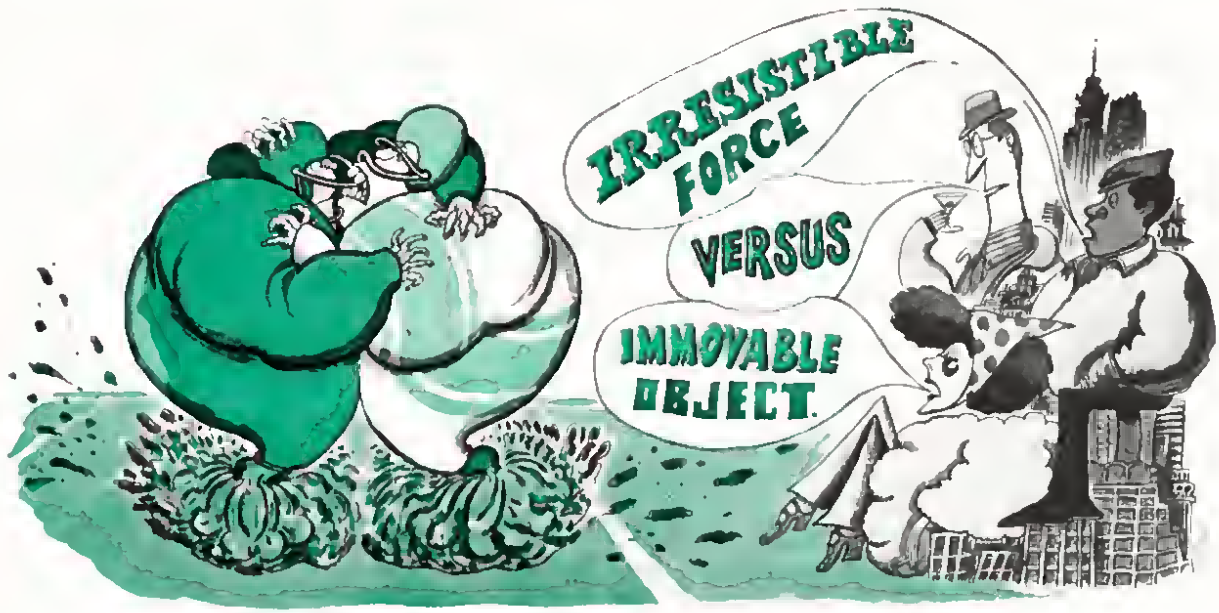
NFL CENTRAL



Defense is still ahead of offense in the Black and Blue Division, and when they've sorted out the fallen bodies, the team with the least weak offense should be on top. Yes, Green Bay.

Norm Van Brocklin liked to call it the "Black and Blue Division," and the NFL's upper Middle Western contingent promises to live up to that billing this year. Indeed, for savage line play, hard running, prime conditioning and pure guesswork, the Central Division has to rate as the Fearsome Foursome of the NFL. Unfortunately for its members, most of the damage is wrought upon themselves by themselves, and the least maimed survivor is likely to take the title—as the Minnesota Vikings, somewhat to their surprise, did last year.

This year's Vikings have something more than durability: a passing attack of sorts. Last year, they were the only team in either league to win a divisional title with more running than passing, and Coach Bud Grant—a former end who likes to throw in practice—seemed to have the best arm on the squad. Now Quarterback Gary Cuozzo is healthy again (though two separate shoulder injuries last season mark him as fragile), and Joe Kapp is adding a little more throwing consistency to his leadership qualities. For a time it looked like Wide Receivers Gene Washington and Bob Grim would be complemented by a quick rookie, Volly Murphy, from UTEP, but Murphy went in the Army. Fortunately, Tight End John Beasley returns from the Army this week. The running game will be stronger than heretofore, with underrated Bill Brown (805 yards rushing, 329 on receptions in '68), Clint Jones (who averaged 4.2 yards a carry last year) and a sound Dave Osborn (who missed most of last season with a knee injury after gaining 972 yards in 1967).

Offensive lines in the Central Division suffer by comparison with the defenses, and Minnesota's is no exception, even though from tackle to tackle the Vikings look like the best. Led by All-NFL Center Mick Tingelhoff, it should give Cuozzo or Kapp time to throw. Tackle Ron Yary, last year's top draft choice, will be back from the Army next month to enhance the pass protection.

Defensively, the Vikings' strong suit remains the front four—Carl Eller, Gary Larsen, Alan Page and Jim (Wrong Way) Marshall. A bit of a flake, Marshall turned up at training camp with a hunting bow and a full quiver of arrows, which he shot every day after dinner on the corn-tasseled ridges of Mankato. Put a leopard skin on him and you have the first Minnesota Tarzan. The Viking linebackers, who went 21 straight games without making an interception, are improved (they stole two passes from Denver during a preseason game), and the corners and safeties are adequate. Thus, if Cuozzo and/or Kapp can get the passing game going, the Vikings will be tough. But, as Bud Grant points out, Minnesota's record against the top NFL teams—Rams, Colts and Cowboys—was 0-5 last year. "If we're going to move up," he says, "we've got to start beating those teams at least half the time."

Is the Pack Back?

That is hardly the problem of the Green Bay Packers, who consistently beat almost every name team over the years only to die at the hands of Minnesota, Detroit and Chicago last season. The Pack was stung to the quick and may very well be back—if not this year, next. Phil Bengtson is finally The Coach (last year, General Manager Vince Lombardi got the suite on road trips while Bengtson took a single), and he has had the Packers running "aerobically" since February. That form of superjogging may have produced the fittest team in football. But where the Packers were faulted for age last year, they are suspect because of inexperience this year.

The offensive line lost two of its four veterans by retirement—Jerry Kra-

continued

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by Rocky Marciano

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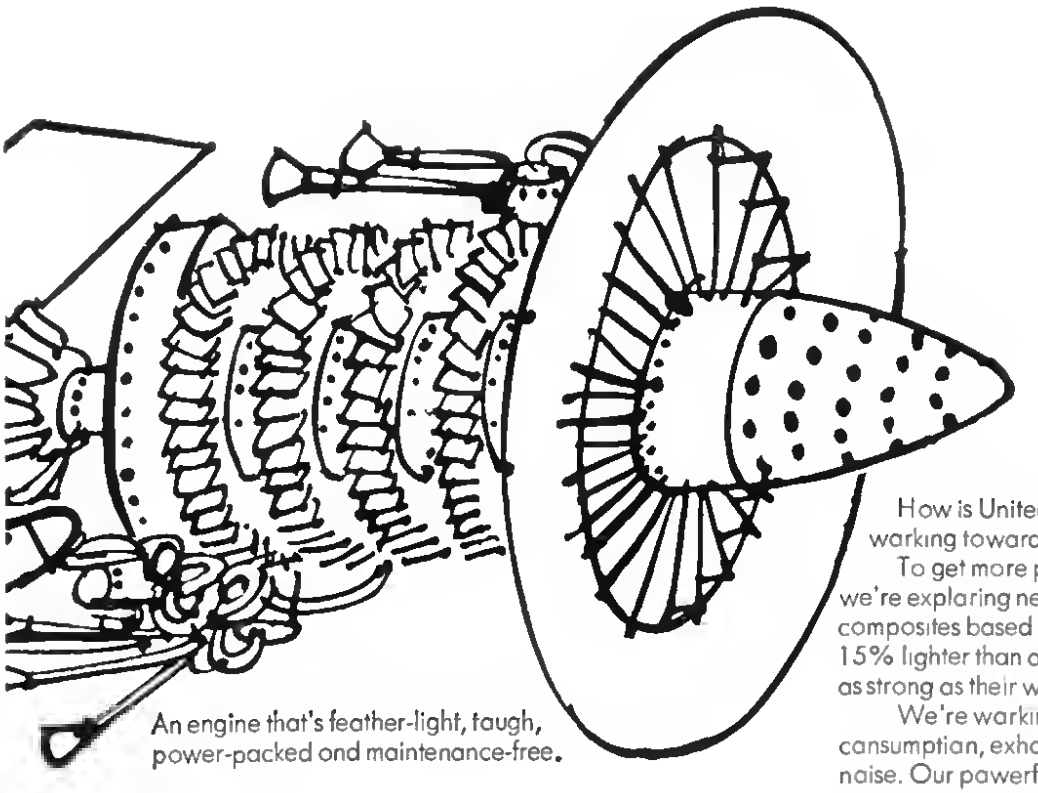

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mer and Bob Skoronski—dealing a blow to Green Bay's traditional foundation. Center Ken Bowman and Guard Gale Gillingham remain, Gillingham moving from left to right, replacing Kramer, while Bob Hyland will probably share left guard with Bill Lueck. Francis Peay, a strong ex-Giant, looks like he has the makings of a Skoronski at left tackle, and the right tackle, who until recently was named either Dick Himes or Bill Hayhoe, once again bears the illustrious name of Forrest Gregg. Gregg had been serving as a coach, supervising line play and helping with the aerobic running program when, as predicted, he "unretired."

Early in the exhibition season, before the new offensive line acquired the timing and teamwork of its predecessor, the Packers kept bogging down and had to settle for field goals. Mike Mercer, a castoff AFL kicker, was high scorer for Green Bay against the Giants, the Bears and the Cowboys, while the Cowboys' pass rush dumped Quarterbacks Bart Starr and Don Horn eight times en route to a 31–13 route. But the new line has cohered and in exhibitions with Cleveland and Pittsburgh the Green Bay quarterbacks were sacked only three times. Mercer's toe remedies a glaring deficiency last season, and the Pack's offensive punch will get stronger. Starr is healthier than he's been in several years and Boyd Dowler and Carroll Dale, although not the fastest wide receivers in the league, pick up steps on defensive backs with knowhow. And Green Bay is rich in runners, too. Though they still have to pay off their price tags, Donny Anderson and Jim Grabowski are solid. Travis Williams is approaching his 1967 form and seems to have edged Elijah Pitts as Anderson's backup, and a burly rookie out of Purdue named Perry Williams may have beat out Chuck Mercein (Yale hero of the 1967 NFL title game). But the hottest running prospect is Dave Hampton, a ninth-round draft choice from Wyoming who combines the explosiveness of the early T. Williams with the continuing shiftiness of Gale Sayers.

Bald but Immortal

Green Bay's defense remains tough and deep. Willie Davis, having announced that this is his last year, is playing as if he were his own replacement. Bengtson sent Defensive Tackle Ron Kostelnik to Baltimore because his No. 1 draft choice, 285-pound Richie Moore from Villanova, looked like an instant regular. The other tackle spot is only as strong as Henry Jordan's aching back or Bob Brown's broken limbs. Green Bay's linebacking gets better all the time: Dave Robinson is wilder and rangier than ever, Ray Nitschke grows more immortal with each falling hair and Lee Roy Caffey, a tough guy himself, is being pushed hard by even tougher Fred Carr, last year's top draft pick from UTEP. The defensive backfield is intact save for Doug Hart who replaces Tom Brown (who followed Vince to D.C.) at strong safety. Green Bay's defense is adequate for championship ball, but it will take more than Mercer's kicking to bring the Pack back.

Much the same problem confronts the Detroit Lions, who like the Packers are rich in offensive talent but seem to be lacking in the necessary beneficence of coordination. Quarterback Bill Munson, who was supposed to be the catalyst, suffered from the black-and-blues last year and seems to be wincing in anticipation this year. Against the Buffalo Bills, he hit only three of 14 passes and overthrew his key receiver, Earl McCullouch, three times when the Pearl was open. Nonetheless, Munson has the arm and head to pull a team together, and if he can do so, the Lions could surprise.

No Central Division team—save the Packers—has as strong a running and passing game as Detroit. McCullouch and Tight End Charlie Sanders are receivers enough, though Billy Gambrell is out for at least half the season after a back operation. Add Bill Triplett, a healthy Mel Farr and a rookie named Altie Taylor, and you have blazing offense. Taylor, who showed up out of Utah State and the All-Star Game, is already known as "Super Rook" to his teammates. In the Buffalo game he ran for 106 yards, including a 48-yard scoring bolt up the middle. While most reporters were badgering O. J. Simpson after the game, Taylor was toweling his scarred, blue-black persona in the solitude of the Lions' dressing room. Did you ever meet O.J. or talk to him? "No, I've never seen him, and I don't know if I'd like to. If he called me up on the phone, maybe I'd talk to him."

The Lions still lack a properly offensive offensive line. But it is a young line, while the defense is getting older. Average age of the front four: 30 years, nine months. Cornerback Lem Barney has been phenomenal in the exhibitions and Safety Mike Weger is as good as they come, but even they can be burned with the lackluster tinder surrounding them. Like most struggling teams, the Lions are looking for specialty points, but they still lack a good field-goal man. Errol Mann, who beat the Lions at Denver two years ago, is reliable in close but has no long-range ability, and Punter Jerry DePoyster is in service, as is Placekicker Garo Yepremian. Still, Lion morale is high—hyped a bit by Altie Taylor's can-do spirit—and Coach Joe Schmidt has a winning attitude. He'd better. If he doesn't win he may be out in the cold next spring. "I think eight wins can take the division," he says. "I hope we can do that well."

On a Foot and a Sayers

Schmidt is a lot more hopeful a hoper than Chicago Bear Coach Jim Dooley. The Bears don't seem to have anything but Placekicker Mac Percival, Gale Sayers and history working for them. Sayers appears to have recovered from last season's knee surgery and will continue to keep defenses busy keying on him. But that's really about it. Quarterback Jack Concannon still runs better than he throws. When Concannon hits his fine Wide Receiver Dick Gordon, watch out, but unfortunately for the Bears the combination doesn't click often enough. With pulling Guard George Seals retired, the offensive line has not been able to coordinate for the sweep, and Dooley has been forced to curtail Sayers' spectacular end runs, sending him either up the middle or into the flat for little swing passes in an effort to shake him clear.

Defensively, the Bears are strong, but nowhere near as strong as in their contending and championship years, although Dick Butkus, the ferocious middle linebacker, is playing superbly this year, as is Defensive End Willie Holman. Richie Petitbon, the thinking-man's safety, is gone to L.A. with (as yet) no adequate replacement, but the whole secondary strategy has been changed; the Bears are finally installing a zone defense, having brought in Minnesota's witty, wily Jimmy Carr, who reduced the Vikings' yield in pass yardage from 2,493 in 1965 to 1,885 last year. Still, the Bears are vulnerable to the deep pass, a fact shrewd quarterbacks are sure to prove as the season wears along.

So how do you bet the Black and Blue? Barring unforeseen bloodbaths, it would seem to line up in the order of least bruises—Packers, Vikings, Lions, Bears.

CONTINUED

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NFL CAPITOL

By almost every measuring device, the Dallas Cowboys are a shoo-in to win the division. The only question is: are they still waiting for the arrival of that streetcar named desire?

The Dallas Cowboys are the best team in football. They scout well, pick wisely, have one of the most intellectual coaches and field the finest 40 physical specimens you'll ever lay eyes on.

Nonetheless, they may not win the most games. Sure, they'll take the Capitol Division, but so would four other teams in the NFL. They can shrug off the loss of a top quarterback (Don Meredith) and a fine fullback (Don Perkins). They will score freely and, on some Sundays, appear devastating. But they won't go all the way.

"They are a gentlemanly team," says one Eastern coach. "They don't beat you up when you play them, and they have the people who could do it. They aren't killers. If they ever develop a killer instinct, they'll spread-eagle the league and destroy any AFL team unlucky enough to play them in the Super Bowl."

The Cowboys' good manners may stem from those of Tom Landry, their head coach. Landry is a quiet, handsome man, unfailingly polite and considerate and thoughtful. He is big, balding and impressive, and he could easily be the minister for a well-heeled Methodist church, adept at getting large contributions from wealthy parishioners without wheedling, renowned for his reasoned, low-key sermons, which painlessly uplift. But he hasn't forged the intense, Lombardian desire which animates pro football dynasties. This year the Cowboys finally decided they hadn't been mean enough and told Landry to run a tough camp; but it's better if the tone is set by the tamer rather than the lions.

Unfortunately, the Capitol is essentially a one-team division. Washington and Philadelphia are starting anew under new coaches (Vince Lombardi and Jerry Williams), and New Orleans is an expansion team. Unfortunately, because by breezing to the division title the Cowboys may again become complacent, a vice which led to their interdivisional loss to Cleveland a year ago.

Despite Perkins' retirement, the Dallas running game looks even better. Dan Reeves, who sat out most of 1968 with a knee injury, is back; Walt Garrison and Les Shy should fill in ably for Perkins; and Yale's massive (6′ 3½″, 227) Calvin Hill, the No. 1 draft choice, whose long strides belie his speed, was a stick-out in the exhibition season. In Lance Rentzel and Bob Hayes (who will miss at least two games due to a shoulder separation), the Cowboys have two of the fastest wide receivers in the NFL, and Mike Ditka, obtained from Philadelphia, will reinforce the team at tight end. The offensive line, led by Tackle Ralph Neely, is agile and adept, equally capable of opening holes for the runners and protecting Quarterback Craig Morton.

If he can overcome a tendency to be erratic, Morton may actually be an improvement on Meredith. He is big, has a powerful arm capable of reaching Hayes and Rentzel on deep patterns, and he is more decisive than Dandy.

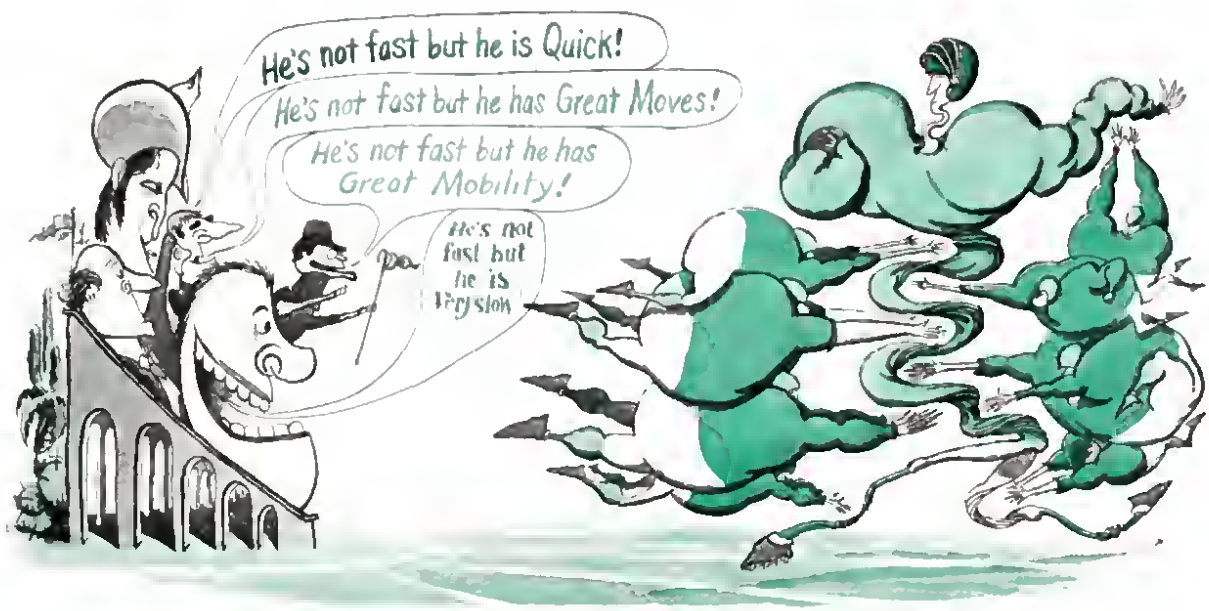
A Believable Arm

"He'll throw into the cracks of a zone," one Dallas assistant says. "He'll throw the tough passes—the sidelines. He'll take chances because he believes in his arm more than Don believed in his. He'll help us."

But Morton is an untried quarterback, still forming his personality. The quarterback and the coach make the personality of a team. If Morton can become the alter ego of Landry in the same manner that Starr was the embodiment of Lombardi on the field, the Cowboys could be phenomenal.

"I don't know what Morton's per-

continued



sonality will he," Landry says. "He is still too busy learning the offenses and how to read defenses. A quarterback doesn't develop a personality until after he is secure in his job and in his mastery of it. When he is trying to remember plays and read defenses, he doesn't have time to express himself. I would like to see him gamble—up to a point. I don't like long-shot gambles. I like a quarterback like Starr, who takes a risk when the odds are in his favor. You don't win championships on long shots."

The Dallas defense is the same as it was a year ago—mostly devastating, but disastrous on occasion. It should be the former all the time. Bob Lilly and Jethro Pugh bulkwark a line which is quicker than the Rams'; the linebackers, with Chuck Howley on the right side, are the peers of Green Bay's, and the secondary is blooded, quick and knowledgeable. There are no obvious soft spots on the Cowboys. If they could hoard a streetcar named desire, the last stop would, appropriately enough, be in New Orleans at the Super Bowl.

In Washington the Redskins will have no trouble being, uh, motivated. No Lombardi-coached team has ever been less than that, but no Lombardi-coached team has ever had less defense, either.

New Guru in D.C.

Even before they reported for preseason training, the Redskins felt the presence of Lombardi. A number of veterans came in early, slim and enthusiastic. Sonny Jurgensen lost his Scotch belly and found a guru, he said he had learned more about quarterbacking in one cram session with Lombardi than he had learned in his 12 years in the league. Other Redskins, intoxicated on Lombardi's spiritual firewater, said they'll win the championship this year.

Maybe. At Green Bay, with better ore, Lombardi didn't mine a championship for two years. But, the Redskins aren't as bad as their reputation. They beat the points almost every time out last year, if not the opposition.

The Redskins will score a lot. They have Jurgensen, a superb offensive line and two of the NFL's best receivers in Charley Taylor and Jerry Smith, and one of the most publicized in Gary Beban, who has been switched to split end. But they'll miss Bobby Mitchell, who abruptly retired two weeks ago, and they have no running. Moreover, not even Lombardi can seal up the holes in the defense, and a porous defense not only gives away points, it denies the offense time and opportunity to score since the opposition has the ball most of the game. The return of 35-year-old Sam Huff could help the line-backing, but not enough, and the secondary is second-rate.

The Philadelphia Eagles will go with their new coach, Jerry Williams, who comes from the Canadian League, where he won two regular-season championships with Calgary. In 1960 he coached the defense for the Eagles, and they won the NFL title. Williams has cleaned house, both in players and assistant coaches, and he will doubtless be more efficient and successful than luckless Joe Kuharich, but he doesn't have the troops.

"I would rank Williams on a par with George Allen of the Rams or Landry for imaginative defenses," says Pete Retzlaff, the general manager of the Eagles. What Retzlaff didn't add was that reality wins ball games.

Williams has a journeyman quarterback in Norm Snead, who could be better with good coaching. Says Snead: "I learned as much about football under Mr. Kuharich as an offensive tackle." The Eagles recently acquired George Mira from the 49ers to back up Snead and they have first-rate receivers—Tight End Fred Hill (who has torn knee ligaments and will miss two games), Gary Ballman, Ben Hawkins and Harold Jackson, a 177-pound juking flier who was on the Rams' taxi squad most of last year. And they have the NFL's No. 3 rusher in bruising Tom Woodeshick, and an outside threat in Leroy Keyes.

The defensive line is strong and deep, the linebackers improved by the addition of young Tony Guillory (obtained from the Rams) and Jim Carroll (gotten from the Redskins in another trade). The secondary has little speed and only one quality player (Joe Scarpati at free safety). All told, the Eagles will be formidable only when Snead is hot and hitting his good receivers. That is not enough.

The status quo, up to a point, prevails at New Orleans, where Tom Fears is still the head coach. Fears, an intense, dark-browed, glowering man, who at one time was the best offensive end in football, came to New Orleans via Atlanta and Green Bay, and he is, in a sense, a Lombardi. Fears has the same ability to drive a team, set it afire, and he commands the same loyalty. This may pay off. He has a collection of salty veterans, promising youngsters and undeveloped rookies—and a quarterback with the indomitable spirit of a Bobby Layne.

"This is the best team we have had," Fears says. "I'm not going to say we can win it all, because I'm not a dreamer. But with a few breaks, it wouldn't be impossible."

No Harm Dreaming

At least two of his veterans are dreaming: Dave Whitsell and Billy Kilmer. Whitsell, a free safety now after a term at cornerback, played with the Bears in 1963 when they won the NFL title. "We can go all the way," he says. "We are as good or better than Philadelphia or Washington, and you know the Cowboys got to miss Meredith and Perkins. We're ready. We have more good players on this club than we had in Chicago in 1963. I feel good about us."

Quarterback Kilmer, who gives the Saints an inestimable lift, feels the same way. "We can win," says Kilmer, who is playing at 200, down 15 pounds from last year. "We got the line, the runners, the catchers, the defense. This is a hell of a club."

He could be right. The Saints, who have the killer instinct the Cowboys seem to lack, have always been tough. They have adequate runners, may get some zip from erratic Joe Don Looney, and Dan Abramowicz heads up a fine set of receivers. Their defense depends, in some measure, on how well 39-year-old Doug Atkins can accelerate from end and whether the defensive backs hold up.

Kilmer's relief may well be Edd Hargett, a sixteenth-round draft choice from Texas A&M, who seems to have edged veteran Jim Ninowski by performing some last-minute heroics in exhibitions against Atlanta and Houston. Another surprise is 268-pound Placekicker Tom Dempsey, who was born without a right hand and with only half a right foot—the one he kicks with. Dempsey really gives the ball a ride, he kicked a 54-yard field goal against Denver in an exhibition. No surprise, but welcome nonetheless, is the fact that the Saints open at home, playing their first two games against the Redskins and the Cowboys with an assured—and maniacal—crowd of 84,000 roaring them on.

"If we get off fast, we can go," says Fears. "All we need is a little luck."

With that, they can beat Philly and Washington. They will need something else against Dallas. **END**

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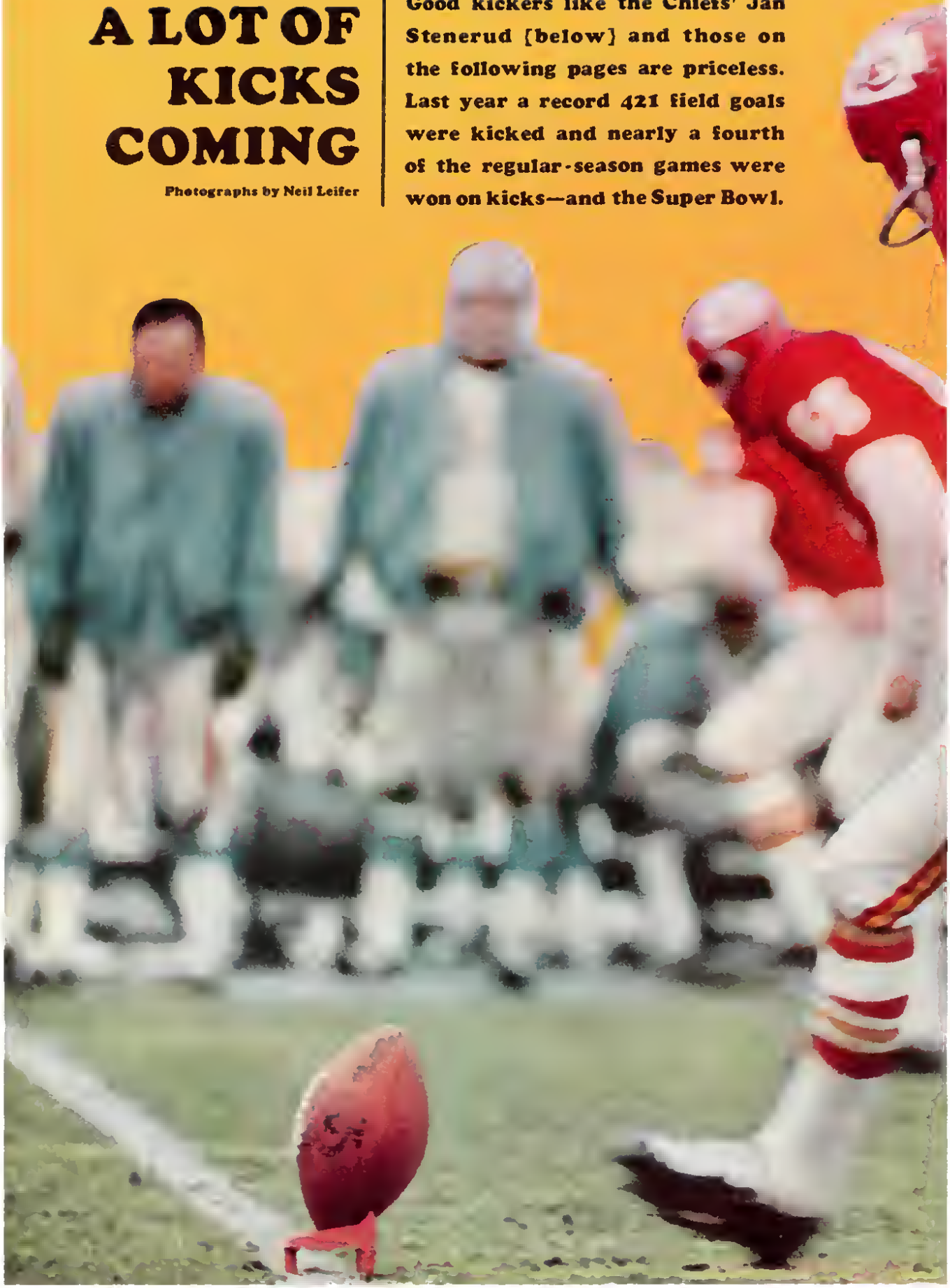
A LOT OF KICKS COMING

Photographs by Neil Leifer

Good kickers like the Chiefs' Jan Stenerud [below] and those on the following pages are priceless. Last year a record 421 field goals were kicked and nearly a fourth of the regular-season games were won on kicks—and the Super Bowl.



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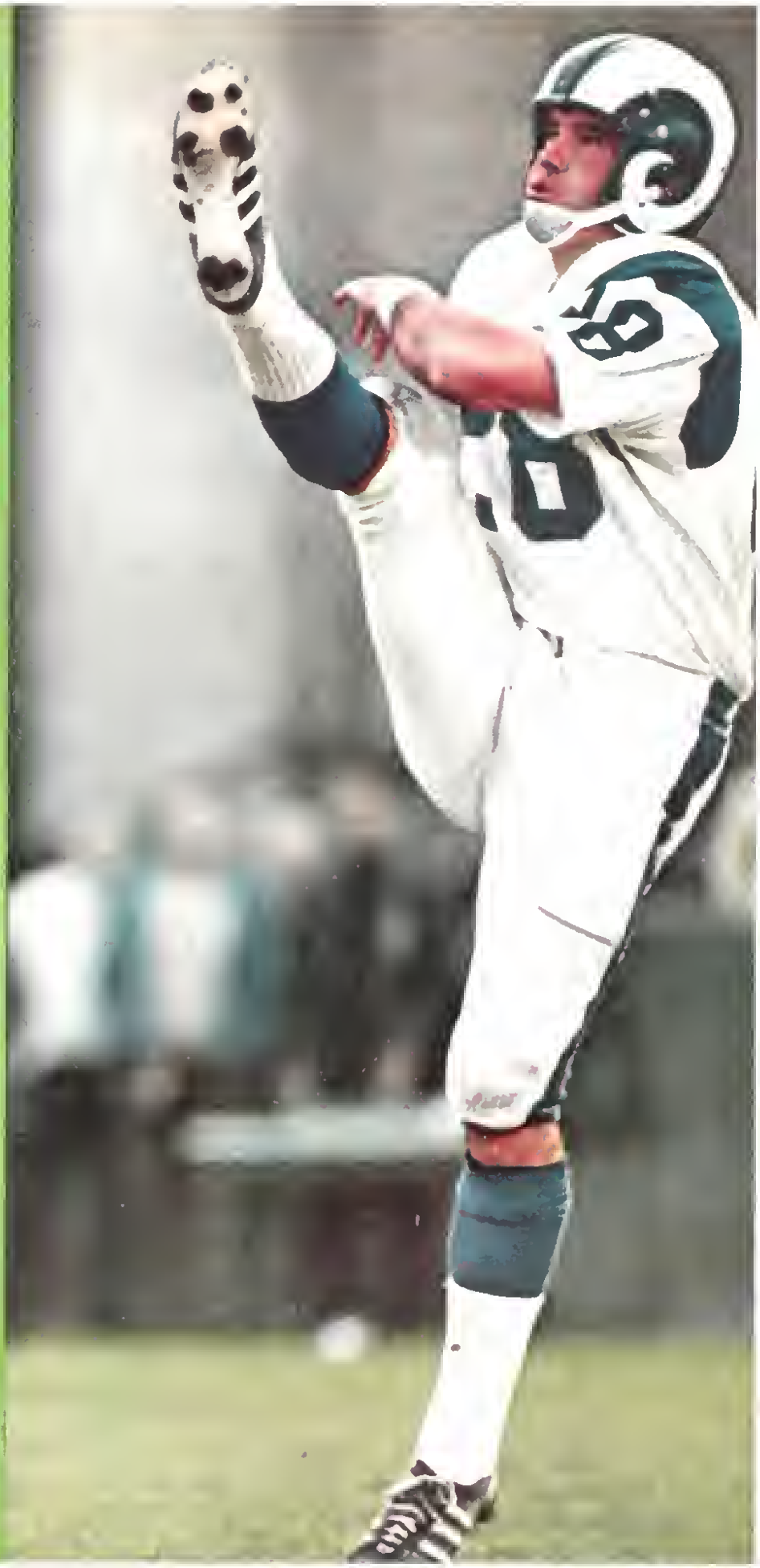


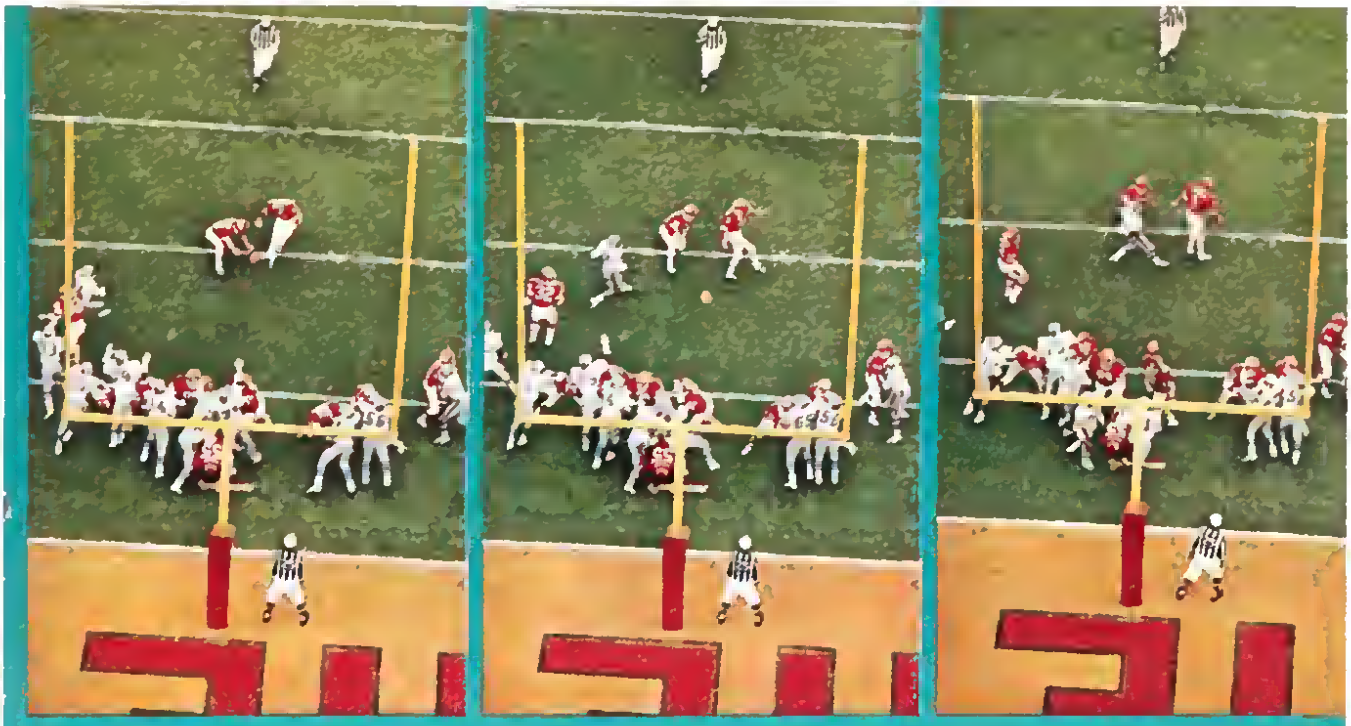
Curley Johnson punts over onrushing John Williams in Super Bowl.

Pat Studstill of the Rams booms one of 81 punts—the league high in 1968.

Don Cockroft kicks the extra point as the Browns' line contains the Dallas charge.

NFL kickers missed only 27 of 555 conversions last season.

80

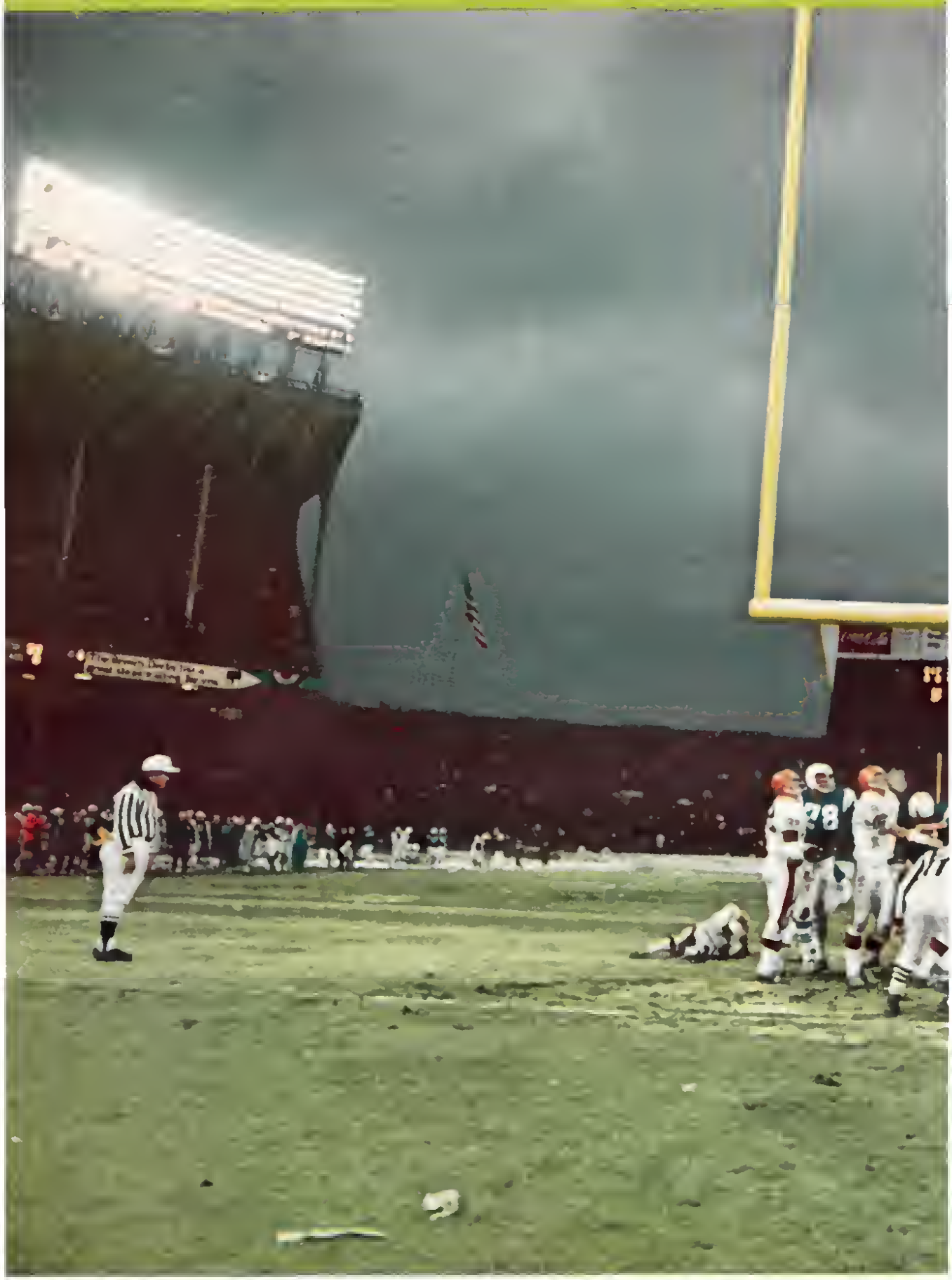


Jan Stenerud boots one soccer-style, Houston Cornerback Zeke Moore breaking through too late.

Minnesota's Jeff Jordan holds as Fred Cox converts over the futile reach of Dallas' Jethro Pugh.

Colt Tackle Bob Vogel takes out Jet John Elliott as Lou Michaels [far left] tries for three points.

In the gloom at Cleveland's Municipal Stadium, Lou Michaels kicks the final point in the



Colts' 34-0 rout of the Browns for the NFL championship.

THE FACE OF AN EDUCATED TOE

by Robert F. Jones

Physically as well as financially, professional football has evolved from the bottom up. Think about it. There was a time, back in the Eocene of the game, when it was indeed *foot*ball. Running, punting, placekicking and even that most difficult of disciplines, dropkicking, were the hallmarks of the great teams. Then (apologies to Desmond Morris), the Armored Ape began his climb. The evolutionary rise went from Grange's knees to Battles' hips to Baugh's arm to Berry's hands to Starr's head to Namath's hair. Along the way, the lowly foot was largely forgotten—except on those grim Sundays when three points or even one, was the difference between defeat and victory.

Among pro football heroes, only Lou Groza attained true stardom on the strength of his foot alone (although he was a stalwart offensive tackle), and he and his Golden Toe went into retirement in 1968. But in the past few years a whole platoon of "pure kickers" has arrived. Foremost among them is Jim Turner (*see cover*) of the New York Jets. And the best time to see Turner kick purely is at a kicking practice, where the more expensive, less pedestrian parts of the football animal are not so obtrusive.

Here we are at Hofstra stadium on verdant Long Island, under a scalding sun with the THI up near the agony level. The Jets jog around on their new carpet of AstroTurf, great mountains of flesh and bug bites, their combative grunts and war cries rising on the moist air like voices from a sewer. The mind flashes ahead in time: if there were some way to ration this heat, that fat, those suntans for use in the shivering, shadhelly days of January. . . .

The Jets' Jim Turner kicked 145 points—a pro record.

Most of the Jets look dreadful—bulhous, slow, stupid, coming off the snap with glazed, poleaxed expressions as if they'd never before heard a "Hut!" The receivers scamper around with desperately waving hands, yards behind the ball. The quarterbacks watch their passes turn awry and sock their fists into their open palms. The linemen pound into Mona, the blocking bag, mouths curled in little moues of pain and self-pity. Moanin' Mona. Wailin' Weeb. The dumpy little coach appears to grow shorter (if that's possible) as the practice progresses, as if some relentless pile driver labeled Doubt were sinking him into the artificial grass.

But it's a kicking day—one of only two a week—and the field-goal unit is working. Fear not, Weeb, the Tank is here, and his treads are turning just fine. Jim Turner lines up his weapons system. John Schmitt, the massive center, spraddles on the 35-yard line and engulfs the ball. It disappears, except for a tiny cone of brown leather visible aft of his pinkies. Then—wink!—Schmitt flexes his wrists and the ball blurs backward, a crude, almost robotlike gesture that deposits it precisely six yards, two feet and 10 inches to the rear. Babe Parilli, contorted on the grass like an advanced Yoga student, palms the ball with his right hand, laces up—and drops it to the exact spot beside his left thigh and under his left index finger that it reaches 99 times in 100 snaps. No wonder they call him Goldfinger.

Turner, blocky and Indian-eyed behind his plastic bars, his armored shoulders sagging in concentration, takes a heavy step forward. His right leg describes a short, brutal, unaesthetic arc. There is a thump reminiscent of a nightstick on a rioter's noggin, and, startlingly, the ball is aloft—the first touch of beauty in the whole ugly day—spinning back on itself with the busy geometrical action of a satellite in orbit as it arches toward the goalpost. Three points. "Way to kick 'em, Tank," chirps Parilli, and the kicking unit chugs back five yards. Weeb Ewbank smiles through his granny glasses. Gazing down at his elfin countenance, one gains the distinct impression that, yes, Frodo lives.

The Jets, like many AFL teams, take their time getting into condition, but Jim Turner and his toe always seem to be in shape. The seeming, however, is deceptive. Casual observers of the football scene assume that kickers are some kind of metatarsal magicians, blessed with a so-called Educated Toe which can guide a football long distances through snow, hail and tricky crosswinds to a three-point landing beyond the goalpost. As a kid in Milwaukee listening to Packer games on the radio, I used to hear WTMJ Announcer Bob Heiss drop his voice in awe when he mentioned Don Hutson's Educated Toe. What did it look like? I wondered. I envisioned it as rather bald and egg-shaped, with perhaps a pince-nez and a mortarboard mounted on the nail. Talking with Turner in the Hofstra locker room after that summer workout, I sneaked a look at his right big toe. It didn't look very smart to me. "You looking at my Educated Toe?" asked the Tank. He wiggled it and gave it a sneer. "I'll tell you where the education in kicking comes from. Right there." He pointed to Parilli—specifi-

continued

cally, to Parilli's big, lean and rather soft hands. "The holder is 70% of the placekicking game. Sure, you need a good center, and Johnny Schmitt is one of the best. And you need a damned good offensive line, which we have. But the holder is the guy. He's got to get it down there in the right spot every time, laces forward. And all the while he's got to be exuding this sense of confidence back at the kicker. The whole thing has got to be smooth and confident. Then, if you groove the swing of your foot anywhere like right, your toe will be as educated as it needs to be."

With that gracious bow toward his teammates—and Jim Turner is one of the most gracious teammates—the Tank seemed to be putting himself down. In point of fact, he is far more important to the kicking equation than he lets on. For one thing, he keeps his legs in excellent condition year-round. During the off season he jogs, sprints and pumps out a regular Tour de France on his cycle exerciser. He plays basketball regularly with "the guys," pounding the big muscles of his legs into toughness, stretching the tendons in rebounds and jump shots. And for Turner, at 6′ 2″ and something just under 220 pounds, to jump and rebound is no mean feat. In the first of his six Jet seasons, Turner worked out with weights. "But they tore my legs up," he recalls. "Now I've got me this trunk, which is just about the height of a bed. Now and then I spend a few minutes stepping up and down on it. It's a simple little exercise, but it combines stretching and compression in just the right proportions."

Compression—not just of the muscular variety—is another factor in kicking which Turner has mastered. For most football players, the game is a continuum of action and interaction. For the kicker, it is a few brief but supercharged moments during which everything rests on his big toe (or, in the case of a soccerstyle kicker, the instep of his foot). Since 1964, when he broke in as the Jets' top kicker, Turner has attempted 174 field goals—which ranks him third in that category in the AFL behind Gino Cappelletti (284) and George Blanda (252). Yet when you figure that, from snap to kick, each of those attempts took less than 1½ seconds, Turner's crucial playing time amounts to a shade over four minutes in five seasons. (If you add extra points, that time would be about eight minutes.) The great danger in this compression, as Turner sees it, is stage fright of the kicking foot. Like a Shakespearean bit player whose role it is to move onstage, announce a calamity and then retire to the wings, the field-goal kicker is prone to blow his cool, his lines and his three points in the most embarrassing way.

To preclude such fiascos, Turner and most other "pure" kickers must keep themselves psyched up throughout the game. "I'm in the game all the time," Turner maintains. "At least, my head is in there. I watch every play, offensive or defensive, to see where they're chewing up the field. Joe [Namath] is very good about that. He asks me every time he comes in where the bad spots for kicking are on the field. You have to be a surveyor to know where all the holes are." And a meteorologist to keep track of the winds. Turner has become a specialist at that arcane art as well, charting each gust, each swirl, each thermal. "I've got a real advantage at Shea," he says of the Jets' home park. "The winds are tricky there—offshore stuff from Long Island Sound fighting it out with the inland winds, a regular Aeolian battleground. But we do all of our practice there during the season under what Weeb calls 'battle conditions.' We even practice at what would be Sunday game time, just so that all the conditions—wind, light, temperature—will be the same as the real thing." Thus Turner has a sound, basic feeling for the vagaries of his enemy, the wind, when the game rolls around. To chart specific wind changes, he keeps a weather eye on all fluttering objects during the game. "The American flag and the end-zone flags are good gauges," he allows, "and until this AstroTurf came in you could always rip up a handful of grass and toss it in the air." Is there any truth to the rumor that Turner and other kickers sometimes plant special agents with pennants at critical spots in the stands to use as wind gauges and/or "gunsights"? Turner leans back, studies the ceiling and says: "Ahhhh, well, no, there's not a word of truth in that. Besides, it's illegal, right?"

How, then, does a kicker "aim"? Turner can talk for hours about such factors as windage, trajectory, initial velocity, angle, etc. with all the jargon and enthusiasm of a rifle nut, but what it boils down to is this: "You line up your foot and your holder along a line that comes just inside the windward upright, you hit it a good shot to get it over the upraised hands of the incoming linemen, and then it either goes through or it doesn't." Turner is not known as an outstanding long-ball kicker. His longest field goal (50 yards) came in his rookie year against Houston, but he was third in the league behind Jan Stenerud and Dennis Partee at 40 to 49 yards. Frankly, he doesn't care that much about distance. His toughest three points was a nine-yarder at an acute angle against the Colts in the Super Bowl. "You've got to get the ball up," he says. "Altitude is the thing. Bubba Smith is 6′ 7″, and when he gets a yard's worth of penetration on the rush, you've got to get that ball up there. It's like kicking over a 10-foot wall, only this wall is mean and strong and covered with hands." Turner likens his kick to a chip shot in golf. "When it gets up high like that, you've got to play the winds. I try to bank 'em into the wind and let it roll the ball over the goalpost. What people don't realize, a following wind is the most difficult. It can drift a ball all over the place."

The ball itself is also a factor. Turner, like most AFL kickers, prefers the NFL football—"The Duke." As he explains it: "The Duke is a little bit fatter, or rounder, than our ball, which is built more for the passing game. There's more meat on their ball to get your toe into." What's more, a ball gets "meatier" with use, probably because with the abuse it gets, its waistline tends to sag a bit. "Sometimes a kicker will try to sneak in last week's ball," says one AFL kicker, "particularly on rainy days." Last season, in fact, just such a ball came flying onto the field from the Oakland Raiders' sideline during a field-goal try, but the officials detected it. The Raiders innocently explained that they were only trying to save the cost of a new ball, which very possibly would disappear into the stands. But the officials weren't buying it. Would Turner ever try such an underhanded tactic? "Gosh, no," he says.

Last season, at least, Turner needed nothing underhanded to help him along. Kicking at a smoky 73.9%, he set a season record of 34 field goals which, when combined with 43 extra points, gave him a total of 145 points—an alltime pro record for a pure kicker. During the exhibition season Turner made 76% of his field-goal attempts, kicking 13 of 17.

continued

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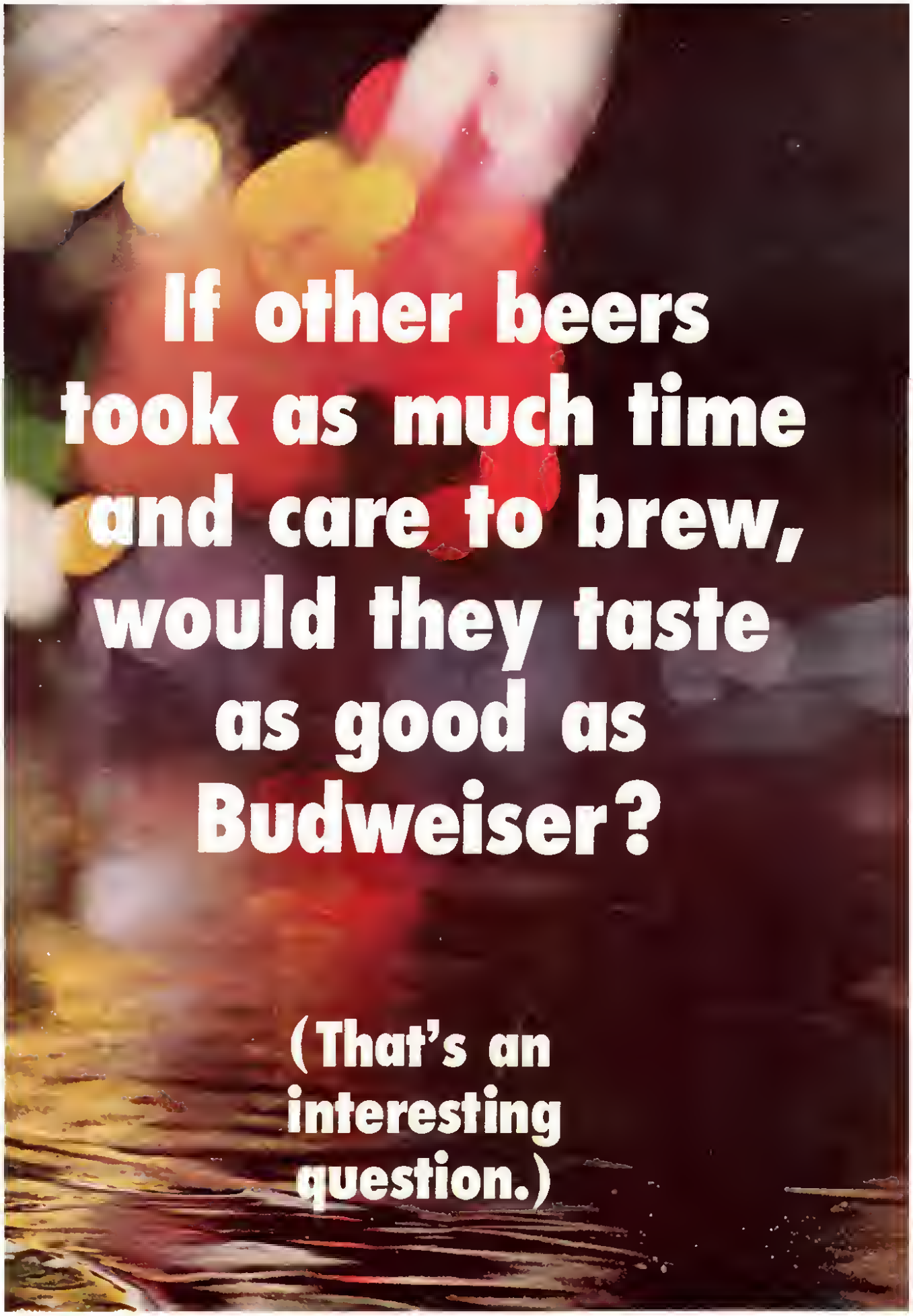
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EDUCATED TOE *continued*

"It was the Jets' year in '68," Turner maintains, "and it will be again this year. Our offensive line is as good or better than ever. They protect Joe like a mother hen, and they take care of me pretty well, too. A lot of people criticize us for going after the field goal when we bog down inside the 35. But we can afford to do that because we have the luxury of a good defense. Joe knows it'll turn the ball back to him pretty quick and give us another shot for the seven. Of course, that makes me look a lot better, getting all those attempts, but one good season for a kicker doesn't mean he's the greatest by any means. But I think my approach is much sounder now. Babe taught me that, along with a lot of other things. He's a real confidence builder. The first day in camp last year, with Babe holding for the first time, I didn't miss a kick. He came up to me afterward and said: 'You know, you're going to kick more field goals than anyone ever.' And he was right."

Turner himself is no slouch at confidence building. His burly presence on the bench seems to transmit that same sense of certainty in scoring that Groza's did for so many years in Cleveland. No one will ever be able to compute just how much of a team's success or "momentum" or call it what you will derives from the vibrations of a confident man on the right side. A good kicker is one of those mystical vibrators. Just knowing that a Groza or a Bruce Gossett, a Stenerud or a Turner is on the sidelines can guy up an offense to drive that extra four yards into field-goal range—and sometimes the four yards turn into 40, and a touchdown. As a reverse case in point, last year's Green Bay Packers—plagued by the lack of a sound kicker until midseason when AFL veteran Mike Mercer showed up—lost much of their momentum, not to mention games. Thus Jim Turner's value to the Jets far transcends his statistical worth (which of course is considerable) as a mere kicker, however pure.

It helps, too, that Turner is quite a guy—wry, warm, witty, low-key and loose. Ambling around the Hofstra campus with Turner, one gets a sense of what he means to the Jets. Hofstra used to be a drag on the eyeballs: beat-up Quonset huts, cracked cement with crabgrass bursting through as if the earth were trying to grow a green Afro. Now the campus stands tall with weird, high-rise dorms, all glass and concrete, grown like the Jets themselves from seedy disrepute to a thing of power, if not glamour. As we slouch along, talking, a figure comes pelting toward us from the cafeteria—a lean, blond kid who seems to be faking out ghosts as he runs back to Tower C, where the Jets live while in camp. The kid flashes Turner a cool, sideways wave of the hand as he passes. Turner flashes him back. "That kid will be good," he says. "Mike Battle out of USC. Punt-return kind of kid, very quick and tough. We all like him."

In the dining hall, where Turner packs away two plates of cold cuts, a mound of coleslaw no larger than an indoor softball and a small pitcher of Kool-Aid, we talk about his nonfootball interests. Turner hails from Crockett, Calif., a small town situated on the tortuous headwaters of San Francisco Bay, near the big and ugly U.S. Navy shipyard at Mare Island. "Crockett isn't one of your precious little pastel *California Dreamin'* kind of towns," says Tank. "It's the real world, with about 4,000 real people in it. It's a hell of a little town, and everything there is great. You can let your little girl walk across town to go to kindergarten. When you can do that, you know you're in a pretty good American town." A 1959 graduate of John Swett High School (enrollment 550), Turner didn't like Crockett all that much as a kid. "Too small and constricting," he says. Now, of course, he's something of a celebrity. His family home is just a block from the John Swett football field, and he reports with a wistful smile, "They put up the goalposts for me when I'm in town, so that I can practice kicking. They even gave me a key to the locker room and unlimited use of the whirlpool bath."

At Swett, Turner excelled not only in football, where he captained and quarterbacked the Indians to an undefeated season in his senior year, but in swimming as well. "It wasn't swimming like you have today," he says, "with that age-group stuff that encourages little girls to swim faster than I ever did as a strong young man. I swam the freestyle sprints and the individual medley, turned the 100 free in about 55 flat. Back then, swimming was part of something bigger called water sports, which included skin diving and water polo and water skiing and surfing. I mean, if you loved the water, you did everything in it." Then

continued

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as now, Turner liked to dive for abalone, working the chilly currents that swirl around the rocks of Point Arena and Point Reyes, north of the Golden Gate. He rarely plied his tire iron any deeper than 30 feet, but in those waters, for a free diver, that is deep and dark enough. Proximity to the water also turned Turner on to striper fishing. "*There's a little bass club in Crockett,*" he says, "and this summer we were taking a lot of fish—10- and 12-pounders, small but a lot of fun. I wish somebody would introduce bluefish to the West Coast. I've plugged for blues out near Montauk Point in New York and gotten into schools that just wouldn't quit." Jim's wife, Mary Kay, is also an ardent angler and killed a 10½-pound steelhead during a recent visit to Depoe Bay, Ore., where Turner owns two big oceanside lots. Mary Kay, who comes from El Sobrante, a town near Crockett, tied the marital blood knot with Turner four years ago. They have a 2-year-old daughter named Lisa Anne, and an infant daughter Christine. Turner also owns property at Mt. Shasta in Northern California, where he plans to do a lot of skiing after he retires—maybe five years from now. "I won't go 15 years like Tittle," he says. "You just can't afford to move a family around that much."

There is this myth about football players that anyone who messes around with a pigskin doesn't deserve a sheepskin. At Utah State, where Turner played quarterback on the same team with such other future pros as Merlin Olsen, Bill Munson and Lionel Aldridge, he earned a degree in history and political science, and he still reads deeply in both fields. Walking back to Turner's room after lunch, we talked about the Civil War, and our discussion of Carl Sandburg's *Lincoln* and Bruce Catton's books led, logically or illogically, to troubles in the current American domestic scene. "I didn't vote last year," said Turner. "Protest, I guess, but there weren't any candidates. Wallace and weaklings, and I don't like either choice. When you look around, as a football player, it makes you glad that you're in the game. Here it's all pretty clear—win or lose, heroes or villains." He ran his hand over his shingle of jet-black hair. "If I don't get a haircut soon I'll have to get a dog license. I guess that tells you what I feel about longhairs."

What about that most famous of long-

continued

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EDUCATED TOE *continued*

hairs, Joe Willie Whatsisname? "He's all right," Turner said. "When he had the trouble with Rozelle, I sent him a telegram from Crockett, telling him I was 100% behind him. He pulls this team together and he holds it there. This team *is* together, there's a sense of community here, and a lot of it derives from Joe."

And a lot of it, too, derives from the foot as well as the head. It's hard to walk around among the Jets without someone coming up and telling you what a great kicker Turner is. "Forgotten man," they say. "About time you did something on kickers." Big John Schmitt walks up and lurches to a halt like a sideburned Godzilla, then launches into an eloquent, articulate and totally charming account of how he, Babe and Tank were getting the ball up in one second flat—one second, mind you, not the customary 1.2 or 1.3—from snap to kick this afternoon. Yet the feeling persists that Tank Turner is a lot more to the Jets than just an Educated Toe. In this highly commercial game, which somehow transcends commercialism, Turner holds the balance between those two antitheses which are symbolized on the one hand by points, bucks and endorsements, and on the other by pride, cool and teamwork. In a tawdry but telltale way, the Score commercial says a lot about this inarticulate area. In it, the Tank sings along with "brothers" Matt Snell, Don Maynard and Bake Turner in melancholy, unmelodious, country-and-western praise of "no more fussin', no more fightin'." A good goal for a football team or a society, a placekicker or a holder.

"You know," says Turner in one of his nearly rhapsodical passages of praise for Babe Parilli, "a holder can really give you trouble if he wants to. He can give you the white knuckle—hold the ball down real hard when you get your toe into it—or he can tilt it just half an inch one way or the other. Then the whole equation goes kahoom." So Score is more than a grooming aid. In fact, when I looked on the top of Turner's dresser in the dorm, there was no Score in evidence, only a can of hair spray that shall remain nameless. What's that, Tank? No Score? He looked at the ceiling and cleared his throat.

"Ahhh, gosh," he said, "I guess I loaned it to a teammate. Or maybe it's over at the locker room. Anyway, let me tell you a little bit more about kicking with the wind. . . ." END

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◆ **Kyle Rote Jr.** is *5' 11", 180* and does the 40 in 4 7. Although only a sophomore, he would probably have been the starting defensive halfback at Oklahoma State this fall—but Kyle Jr isn't at Stillwater anymore This month he transferred to The University of the South in Sewanee, Tenn., because Sewanee competes in the tough College Athletic Conference along with Centre, Southwestern at Memphis, Washington University of St Louis and Washington and Lee Competes in soccer, that is Kyle Jr has given up football "I'm not saying anything's wrong with football," he says, "but I believe I can help make soccer a major sport." Kyle Jr became a convert last year when he toured England with the Longhorn Soccer Club "English soccer is rough soccer," he says, admiringly Kyle Jr started playing the game three years ago when professional soccer was introduced to Dallas Says Ron Newman, coach of the Dallas Tornados, "He scrimmaged against us one day and scored

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two goals clean as a whistle whacked 'em into the back of the net I was quite impressed He would be a very good center forward prospect in England"

Dr. C C Humphreys, president of Memphis State University (and a SPORTS ILLUSTRATED Silver Anniversary All-America) reports that an awards banquet where he was to speak was delayed by a long line of people who wanted **O. J. Simpson** to sign their programs One man came up to Simpson and pleaded, "O J , will you write on my program, 'Herbie, I like liver,' because his mother wants Herbie to eat more liver because it's good for him, but Herbie doesn't like liver, and if you say you like liver he'll eat liver?" Said O J , "But I *don't* like liver"

"My interest at the moment is baseball I'm very keen on the Mets," says the creator of the immortal Jeeves, namely the also immortal **P. G. Wodehouse.** "They're wonderful, a wonderful team It must be great for Gil Hodges, I mean, he's picked them up from nowhere" As for his own current athletic endeavors, Mr Wodehouse says, "I just watch sports now I am 88, you know But I do watch most of them, though I'm not very fond of professional football Very sad about Arnie Palmer, he seems to have fallen back—there seem to be so many new people in golf—fellow named Shaw won a tournament just the other day, I had never heard of him" Asked about his own pursuits back when he was pursuing them, Mr Wodehouse made it clear that the years had not clouded his memory, nor had the distance in time lent any enchantment "Of all of the sports I have indulged in," he said, "well, actually, I was not very good at any of them"

● **Claudia Cardinale** bought her son Patrick a bicycle and gave him lessons in the garden of her villa north of Rome, though she hasn't ridden herself since she was a child Attempting to ride pillion behind Patrick, La Cardinale slipped and brought down son and bicycle "One sees I am not made for sport," she observed ruefully Hmmm

Senator **Edmund Muskie** came down with a bad case of golf two years ago and it appears to be getting worse "He has a fine swing, he has good hand action," says pro Bill Burns of Webhannet, Me., "and I get a kick out of the Senator's impatience" Muskie was impatient the other day, all right, toiling around the Webhannet course "One day I hit them pretty good and I find myself a bit encouraged," he mourned, "but then I hit one like this [driving into an alder patch] and I wish I'd stuck to digging clams" It didn't help that the bushes were full of tourists, watching the every move of the man who may be the next Democratic Presidential candidate Muskie's run-on observations ("I have been coming to this part of Maine since my college days, like all of Maine, this is beautiful country, I can't get back here often enough, we're indeed lucky to be State-of-Mainers—now look at that shot, isn't that awful? What am I doing wrong now? Gracious, oh boy, I'm ashamed of myself for playing so badly!") sound like the words of a man trying hard to keep his eye on the ball and the main chance

English show-jumping champion and Olympic silver medalist **Marion Coakes** recently married **David Mould,** the Queen Mother's national hunt jockey Conspicuous among the guests at the reception was the new Mrs Mould's celebrated jumper, Stroller, but no one was so base as to suggest that the bride married just because she really needed a groom

Earl Weaver has not been the best-known manager in the majors, but, with the Orioles having clinched the American League's Eastern Division, things have been getting a little better "Sometimes people walk up to me now and say, 'Mr. Weaver, may I have your autograph?'" he reports with modest pride Aglow with this new fame, Weaver dropped in to see a favorite singer, **Brenda Lee,** at a Baltimore club and, sure enough, she stopped the show to introduce him. "Ladies and gentlemen," she said, "there is a sports celebrity in the audience, the manager of the Baltimore Orioles, Earl Warren!"

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'Won't somebody help me buy this horse?'

That was the piteous cry of Don Le Vine, who fell in love with a chestnut colt that had lost its first three races by 51 lengths. Now Don and his two partners have five times their money back and a Kentucky Derby hopeful

His friends and backers will be happy to know that Ring for Nurse is thoroughly enjoying his seaside vacation in Atlantic City. All he does is eat and sleep and look pretty for the folks who come by to take his picture or tickle his nose. He does not even have to go through any of those annoying workouts, but then he always loafs through them anyhow. Yes, it is a good life, and the results are spectacular: his body has filled out grandly, and his copper hide gleams like a bright new penny in the sunshine.

The last time the racing public saw Ring for Nurse was on Aug. 7 at New Jersey's Monmouth Park, when he crossed the finish line three-quarters of a length ahead of some of the nation's best 2-year-olds in the $112,580 Sapling Stakes. Besides being his fifth straight victory and his second in a stakes within five days, the Sapling raised Ring for Nurse's earnings to $126,258, or more than five times what his three owners had paid for him exactly two months before. That's not bad for a colt who lost his first three races by a total of 51 lengths. After the Sapling, his flabbergasted young trainer, Don Le Vine, decided this was a good time for everybody, the horse included, to take a nice, long rest and try to put the whole crazy chain of events into some kind of reasonable perspective. After all, there are people in racing today—good, sensible people, too—who think that Ring for Nurse may be the best 2-year-old in the country and quite possibly the winner of the 1970 Kentucky Derby.

AFTER WINNING the $100,000 Sapling Stakes at Monmouth Park, Le Vine and Ring for Nurse's jockey, Mike Miceli, receive the trophy from Mr. and Mrs. Philip Iselin. Le Vine's grinning co-owners (from left) are CBS television Producer Frank Chirkinian, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Levy, Mrs. Chirkinian and Mrs. Le Vine, sister of Monaco's Princess Grace.

Every time somebody mentions the Derby around his barn, Le Vine, who just had surgery for a chronic bleeding ulcer, rolls his eyes around and bites his nails and goes looking for wood to knock on. His state of mind is not helped any by the fact that one of his partners in the improbable triumvirate that owns Ring for Nurse—TV Sports Producer Frank Chirkinian—talks freely about winning the classic. Chirkinian directed the Derby coverage for CBS for six years and now is enchanted by the "irony," as he calls it, of going back to Louisville next May as the owner of a contender. "And, for God's sake, whatever you do," he told a colleague at CBS the other day, "when I walk into the winner's circle at Churchill Downs *don't* throw it up to the camera in the Goodyear blimp."

The third partner is Bob Levy, a balding, blustering young man who is the president of Atlantic City Race Course. Levy is known to his partners, with varying degrees of affection, as "that idiot," because his arm had to be twisted hard before he consented to buying a piece of Ring for Nurse. And even now he is unpersuaded that the colt is the next Man o' War.

"He's a freak, that's what he is," said Levy recently in his office, running his fingers through what used to be hair. "Truthfully, I thought we might win one race, then run him in some claiming race. I looked up his pedigree, and so far as I can see, there have been no stakes winners on the female side since 1934. [The dam, Big Benigna, is virtually anonymous, but the sire, Run for

continued

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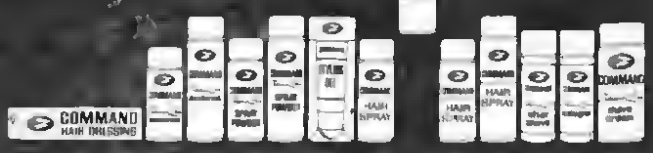

COMMAND

Nurse, is hardly that. His dam is a Count Fleet mare.] I've got to think that his pedigree will catch up with him sooner or later."

"That idiot!" chorused Le Vine and Chirkinian. Neither Chirkinian, for all his innocent optimism, nor Levy, for all his persistent pessimism, plays more than a peripheral role in the saga of Ring for Nurse. They put up most of the money to buy him, but Don Le Vine is the man who first saw the colt, who determined to race him or else and who brought him to his present position.

Le Vine, from Pittsburgh, had played football at Bethany College, then knocked around as a lifeguard and stockbroker before becoming a horseman and TV commentator. Until Ring for Nurse came along, though, he was best known as Princess Grace's brother-in-law (married to Lizanne Kelly), the guy who rattled teacups all up and down Philadelphia's Main Line when he quit a perfectly respectable business—stockbroking—to live and work with (shudder) those beasts.

The Ring for Nurse story began in Florida last January. He was the property of Kenny Noe Sr., an old horseman with a penchant for developing young horses, then selling them at a profit for himself and his owners. On Jan. 30 Ring for Nurse made his debut in a three-furlong dash at Hialeah, and he finished 11th, a full 21 lengths behind the winner. His next two starts, at the same distance and track, were hardly more promising. He was beaten 15 lengths in each, finishing 13th in one race and getting all the way up to 12th in the other. At this point the word was out that Noe was worried, understandably, that he would *never* be able to unload this dog.

Ring for Nurse next appeared at a different track (Gulfstream), with a different jockey (Mike Miceli), over a different distance (five furlongs). His workouts before the races were as atrocious as ever—a trait that Le Vine attributes simply to laziness—but, to the complete astonishment of everyone, he won and by six lengths. Among the fans that afternoon was Le Vine, and he was impressed enough to do some homework on Ring for Nurse.

"I went back and checked the records," said Le Vine, "and I found that this horse and one named Insubordination were the only colts who had been

continued

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able to go five furlongs in 58 and change at Gulfstream I became interested."

As the racing crowd picked up and began to move North, Kenny Noe was letting it be known that his new sensation "I always knew he was a good horse," Kenny was saying—could be had for a cool $40,000

At Garden State in New Jersey, almost every horseman on the grounds, including Le Vine, came around to Noe's barn to look the colt over, but the price tag scared them off Also, Ring for Nurse was his usual miserable self in workouts. As Noe was biding his time, his barn caught fire and burned to the ground. Five of his horses ran back into their stalls and were burned to death. Ring for Nurse had sense enough to stay away, and he was the only one who came out of the tragedy unscathed The months of April and May passed with a lot of old-fashioned horse bartering between Le Vine and Noe

"I used to go over there four times a week to look at the colt," Le Vine recalled "I decided t really wanted to buy him t had tried to find a fault, but just couldn't do it. The trouble was, t didn't have the $40,000 and Kenny wouldn't budge

"I called all my owners, and I called a lot of other people I knew, but it's a difficult thing to get people to put up that much money for a horse Now I wanted this horse badly. t called Bob Levy but he wouldn't buy I couldn't get anything, and t was sweating it out, because I was afraid I would go over there one day and he would be gone. The price came down to $35,000, and still nobody went Then one Saturday morning at Monmouth he told me he would take $30,000 I ran off looking for a phone booth "

The first person Le Vine called early that Saturday morning, June 7, was Levy He asked Levy to put up $15,000 and go half with him "First Bobby wanted to know why Kenny had dropped the price," Le Vine said "He was suspicious; he said something was probably wrong with him. He hemmed and hawed around, and finally he said he would put up $10,000 if I could get someone to go the other third. t hung up before he could change his mind."

Now Le Vine had another problem. Who else would be sporting enough to put up a quick $10,000 for a racehorse, sight unseen? Why, Frank Chirkinian,

continued

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of course. "He just popped into my mind," Le Vine said. "We had a horse before, and I knew Frank had the dough, and I knew he swings."

It was 7 a.m. when the phone rang in Chirkinian's motel room in Chicago, where he had gone on business. Chirkinian may swing, but not at 7 a.m. "I was kinda awake," he says, "but when Don mentioned $10,000 that woke me up. I had to admire any guy who would call me up in the middle of the night and ask for $10,000. So I said O.K. He hung up and I went back to bed, and I thought, 'Hey, that was kind of impetuous,' and then I went back to sleep."

Almost before Chirkinian's head hit the pillow in Chicago, Le Vine was back at Noe's barn. "I told him my man wouldn't put up more than $25,000," Le Vine said, "and then I walked away and stayed away for about a half hour. Then I arranged to bump into him again."

They haggled a while longer, and finally Noe, who by this time was probably chiefly concerned with getting Le Vine out of his hair, agreed to sell for $25,000. "I had the check made out so quick you wouldn't believe it," Le Vine said, "and my groom already was on the way over to Kenny's barn with a halter."

The only thing wrong was that there was no money in the bank to cover Le Vine's check. He called Levy back, explained the situation and coerced Levy into wiring the full amount—$25,000—to cover the check.

Ring for Nurse was not exactly an instant success for Le Vine. Once he worked five furlongs in 1:06, which is terribly slow. Then he worked three-quarters of a mile in 1:20, which is even worse. Nobody could understand why Le Vine did not leap off the grandstand roof. "This horse can get himself ready with slow works," he said. "Sure, he's lazy, but this is what I love. He knows what's going on. He relaxes in his stall, but when he gets in a race—bang—he will be beautiful."

Nevertheless, Levy was dumfounded when Le Vine told him that Ring for Nurse would run in an allowance race on June 21 at Monmouth. "You're out of your mind," exploded Levy. "If you want my advice, take him to Liberty Bell and run him against some cheap claimers."

Well, Ring for Nurse won the allowance race by 3½ lengths. Then he did go to Liberty Bell, but instead of running against claimers the colt was entered in the Dragoon Stakes on June 28. He won by a neck and set a track record. The partners were delirious with joy, and Levy figured that now would be a good time to unload his share for $10,000. That brought Le Vine storming into Levy's office for a lively conversation that ended with Le Vine saying, "And furthermore, Bobby, I don't want you ever to speak to me again."

"Hey, Don," said Levy, "who do you like in the double today?"

Levy finally decided not to sell his interest, but that was of less concern to Le Vine than the problem of where next to

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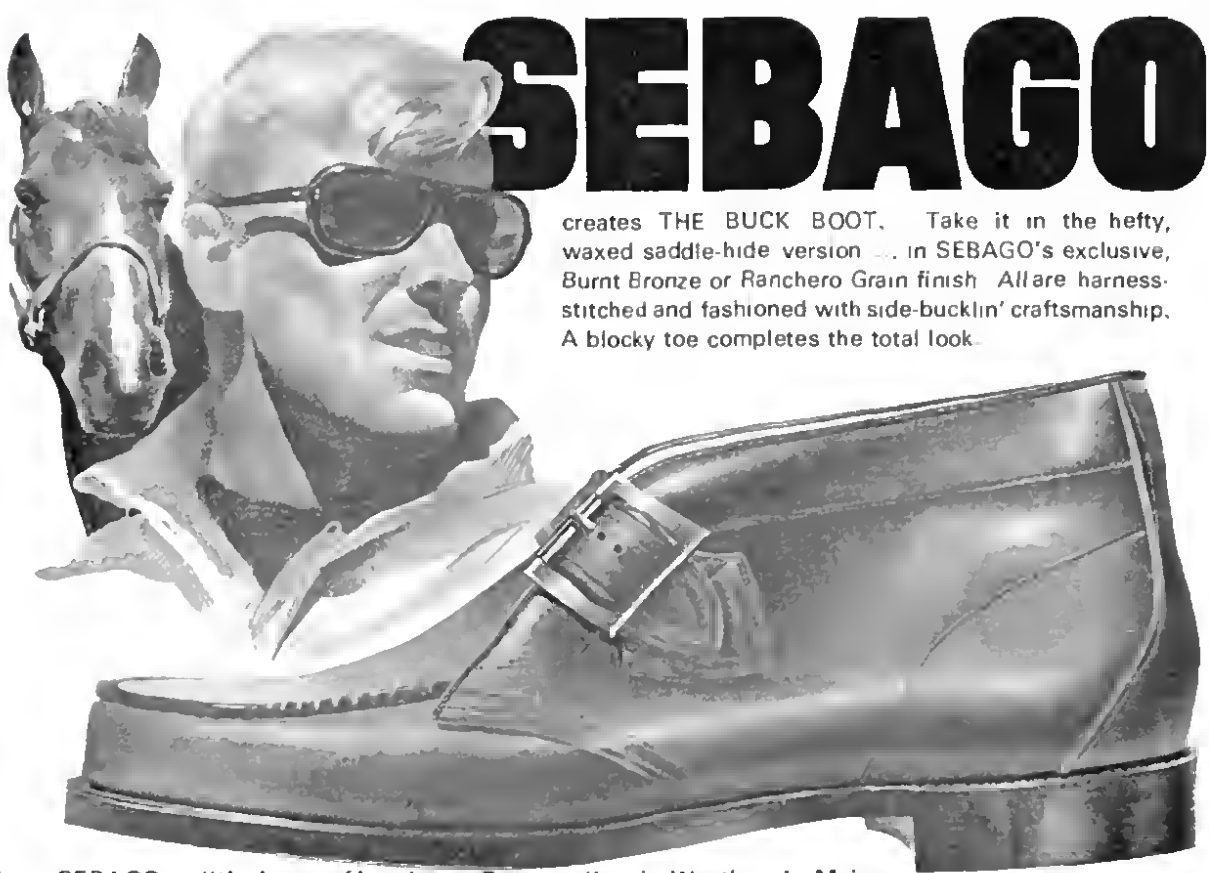

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run Ring for Nurse. As Le Vine figured it, there was a choice between the Kindergarten, a $59,000 race at Liberty Bell on Saturday, Aug. 2, or the Sapling at Monmouth the following Thursday.

"The horse looked real good and a $35,000 purse seemed like a lot of money," said Le Vine, "so I thought I'd be real cute. I decided to take a shot at the Kindergarten because all the big guns were going in the Sapling."

Ring for Nurse won the Kindergarten by eight lengths. Somebody offered the partners $100,000 for their colt, but Chirkinian, who by now was feeling like C. V. Whitney, said, "We're frankly planning on going to the Kentucky Derby, and that's why we're not interested in any big profit right now."

The plan was to give the colt a rest after the Kindergarten, so Chirkinian almost choked on his drink Wednesday night, Aug. 6, when the news came that Le Vine had entered Ring for Nurse in the Sapling the next day. "I thought maybe Don should go back to being a stockbroker," he said.

But Le Vine knew what he was doing. "On the Sunday after the Kindergarten he looked like a fresh horse," he said. "He was really on the muscle, like a tiger, shining like bright copper. I called in two vets and we had a consultation. He galloped Wednesday morning and looked good. I went over and quietly put his name in the entry box."

The Sapling field included what so far had been the best 2-year-olds in the country—Insubordination, Irish Castle, Rollicking. Many of the top jockeys—Baeza, Ycaza, Belmonte—came in for the race. Surely, faced with this kind of competition, Ring for Nurse and Mike Miceli were in over their heads. At the start, Ring for Nurse broke quickly, but Miceli took him back. On the stretch turn, Rollicking forced him to the far outside, but Ring for Nurse came on under the whip to win.

On the elevator ride from the clubhouse to the winner's circle, Chirkinian did his best to calm his partners down. "Now, for God's sake," he said, "let's walk to the winner's circle with a modicum of dignity."

Yes, said everyone, that's the thing. Dignity. Show a little class.

"So, of course," said Chirkinian later, "when the doors opened it looked like a cavalry charge out of there."

The Red Brick Stable has received at least one feeler for Ring for Nurse for a quarter of a million dollars. Both Le Vine and Chirkinian say they are too involved to sell now, but Levy still may sell his share—for $75,000. The colt will go back into training later this fall, says Le Vine, but he may not race again until the Florida season this winter.

"I want to take my time with him," said Le Vine recently as he watched Ring for Nurse being walked near his barn.

At that moment the colt turned, and the sunshine caught his gleaming coat just the right way.

"You know," said Le Vine, with a smile, "he does sort of look like Majestic Prince, doesn't he?" **END**

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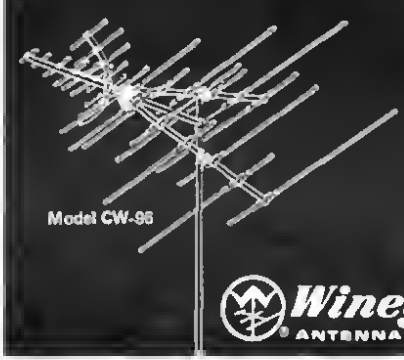

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BRIDGE / *Charles Goren*

Goodby to a perfect partner

With the death of Helen Sobel—I could never get used to calling her *Mrs. Stanley Smith*—I have lost my favorite partner, and the world has lost the greatest woman bridge player who ever lived. But Helen was far more than that, she was a great wit and an indomitable debater on any subject other than religion or politics—although we never had a real bridge argument, not because she followed my precepts but because she usually turned out to be right. She was the contradiction of the statement that at the top level of competition no woman can be a match for the best of the men. Helen won more national titles than I did, and at the time of her virtual retirement from tournament competition she had won more major *open* championships than any other players except Howard Schenken and John Crawford.

We were often and inaccurately linked romantically, with the result that when her divorce from Al Sobel became public she was besieged by reporters who wanted to know if she and Charles Goren would marry. Even though we were in the midst of a tournament, Helen cracked, "We would in a moment—if anybody would have us."

Helen wore her honors with pride and grace. Once when we were playing as partners amid the usual horde of kibitzers, one gushing sycophant of mine asked her, "How does it feel to play with a great expert?" Helen shrugged, nodded to me across the table and replied, "Ask him."

Outwitting the greatest players in the game was part of her fun, just as it was significant of her tremendous will to win. For instance, she treasured this hand in which she flimflammed one of the world's top stars.

Neither side vulnerable
South dealer

NORTH
♠ 3
♥ K 4
♦ A Q 9 7 4 2
♣ A K 6 3

WEST
♠ A 9 7 5
♥ Q J 10 7 6
♦ K 3
♣ J 10

EAST
♠
♥ A 8 5 2
♦ 10 8 6 5
♣ Q 9 8 5 4

SOUTH
♠ K Q J 10 8 6 4 2
♥ 9 3
♦ J
♣ 7 2

SOUTH	WEST (*Helen*)	NORTH	EAST (*Me*)
4 ♠	PASS	PASS	PASS

Opening lead: queen of hearts

Declarer covered Helen's opening lead of the queen of hearts with dummy's king. I won with the ace and returned the heart deuce. When she won the trick she returned the jack of clubs, won by dummy's ace. I showed out on declarer's trump lead, and after Helen won one of declarer's honors with the ace she got out by leading the 10 of clubs, won in dummy.

For Helen, it was no problem at all to see that declarer's only dilemma would be how to get back to his hand to draw trumps. Obviously he could not afford to ruff anything high, since that would set up Helen's 9 of spades. Since he could have at most one more minor-suit card and all the rest of his hand must be trumps, the only thing he needed to do was to avoid being overruffed in whichever minor suit he elected to play.

As declarer's first step in deciding the safest way back to his hand, he cashed dummy's diamond ace. Helen smoothly dropped the king! The great expert opposing us looked suspiciously at Helen. He knew better than to be taken in by what she herself called a gal who "looked like a dumb blonde." But he had to go with the odds that Helen's play of the king of diamonds was made because she had no other diamond to play. Therefore, he had to hope she had another club. Accordingly, he led a third club and ruffed with the 8. Helen produced the 9 of spades to win the setting trick and rubbed it in a bit by returning her remaining diamond.

It was a bit of gamesmanship that proved that Helen played as well as a man. But she always acted like a lady. The entire world of tournament bridge, I know, joins me in my mourning. END

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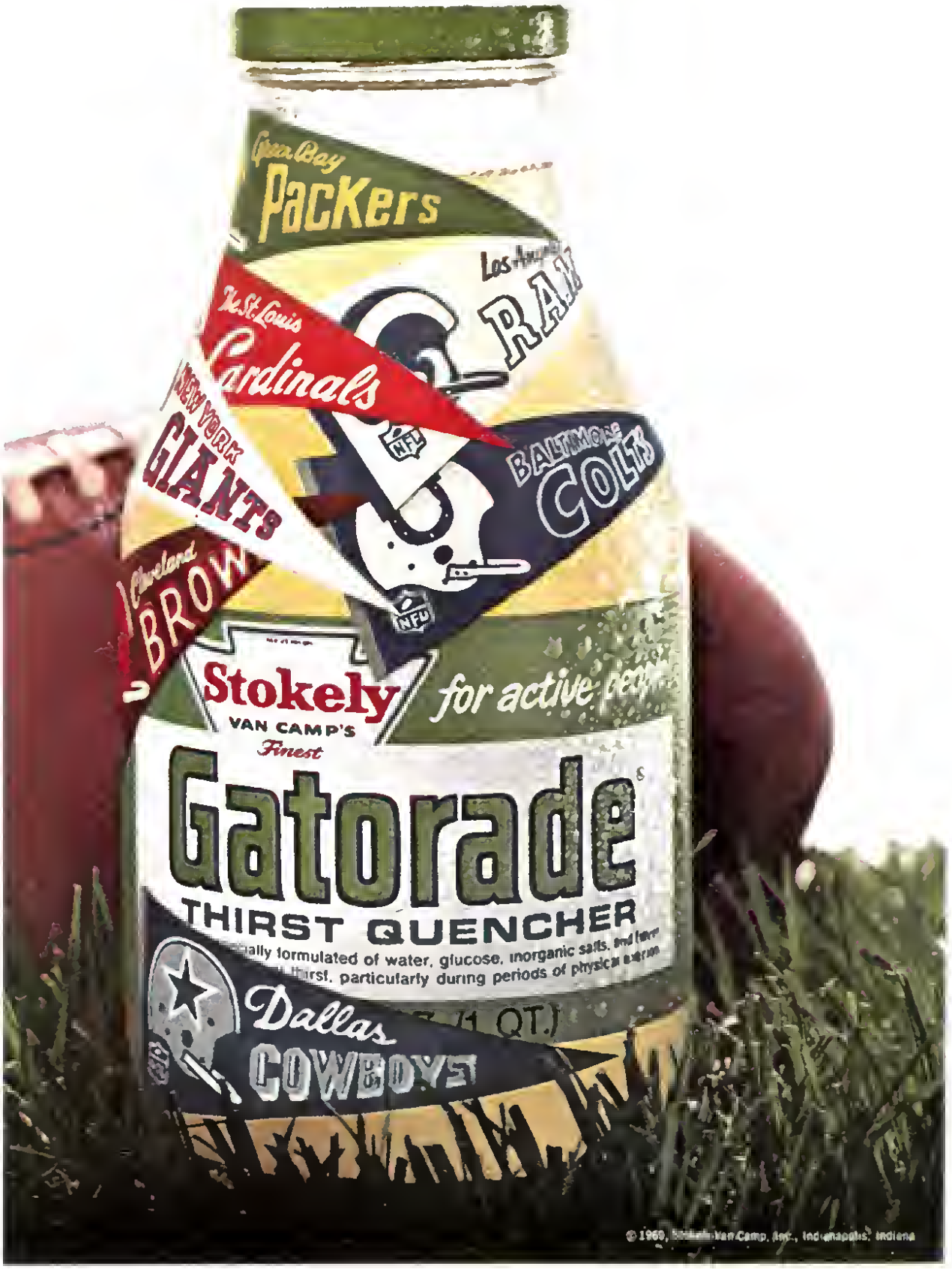
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Chuck Hixson presents his 1969 SMU aerial circus

Watch the Mustangs and their exciting passer play catch. They'll amaze you, thrill you and maybe even win. But not last week

If this was what college football had come to in 100 years, all of this insanity created by Chuck Hixson down there on the floor of the Cotton Bowl, then one had to wonder whether the game really needs to be played by 11 men on a side. Maybe you just need a guy to pitch and four or five fellows to go jump up in the air and see if they can catch it before the other side does. This was the sort of football game that crazy SMU staged against the Air Force in Dallas last week to welcome in the sport to a new century. All night SMU's Hixson threw the ball at everybody—you, us, them, Mustangs, Falcons, Kilgore Rangerettes, almost up to the lights—and if he had thrown just one more, he might have even won the game. But somehow that didn't seem important. Could a game like this have a winner? That became the question.

It did, of course, for the record. The Air Force survived the whacky evening by a count of 26–22, largely because it utilized several of the sport's more basic concepts—running, for example, and defense and kicking. Together with this it had enough passing of its own to build a 23–0 halftime lead and then hang on while Chuck Hixson did his number.

The Falcons had a quarterback of their own named Gary Baxter, who was a little more of what America remembers in the way of a quarterback. He runs with a style that has earned him the nickname of "Spider," and he has other runners with him—Curtis Martin and Ernie Jennings—who can fly or hammer away. And Baxter's all-round ability at sprinting out, dodging and also hitting 15 passes—a sane number—got the Air Force rolling quickly and got them two touchdowns and four field goals by a dandy kicker named Dennis Leuthauser, enough to survive SMU's rally.

Against most other collegiate teams, the game would have been over at halftime because the Air Force is a solid team, one with everybody back from a 7-3 season, and they had this big cushion. But the Air Force was dealing with SMU, you know and Chuck Hixson, who hold this belief that the football belongs in the air all the time. So Hixson put it up there a total of 53 times during the evening as a continuance of what began a year ago at SMU and was labeled "Excitement '68" by a public-relations firm hired by the school.

Although a Dallas columnist quickly renamed it "Excitement '68, SMU 0," Hixson completed more passes for more yards than any sophomore in the history of the game, and his coach, Hayden Fry, decided that Chuck was the greatest passer football had ever had. For a while last Saturday he looked the part.

With Hixson out there, SMU was bound to start scoring, one felt. After all, last year the Mustangs had trailed eight times at the half but had managed to win eight games, and they had averaged 28 points a game. The Air Force had "only" a 23-point lead. "Hixson has five points to play with," said Bill Morgan, the

continued

Southwest Conference publicity director

Well, the tall, extremely mature-looking quarterback finally got started. Standing back there in his pocket, unblinking, and spraying passes everywhere, he wheeled the Mustangs 94 yards to get eight points on the scoreboard. Then he did it again for eight more. And now the new scoreboard in the Cotton Bowl began to perk up. "Go, go, go, go," it flashed. And then it said, "Remember the miraclemakers of '68?" The 43,000 Mustang rooters stood up and the 1,000 cadets who had been airlifted in from Colorado Springs sat down. It was 23–16 now, and Hixson was hot.

Chuck, who replies good-humoredly to his fans who think of him as a born pro quarterback by saying, "I can run like Unitas and I've got hair like Tittle," was not all that hot, however. He didn't get the Mustangs their other touchdown right away, and Spider Baxter drove the Falcons to that other field goal to increase their lead to 10 points. When Hixson did get a touchdown, there were only 40 seconds left in the game, and SMU *still needed four more points.*

Everyone in the stadium—and anyone watching national television who had not gone to sleep after halftime—knew that SMU would try an onside kick. It did, and, like the miraclemakers of a year ago, the Ponies recovered it at midfield. This only took one second. So Hixson had to go 50 yards in 39 seconds with no time-outs left.

Since he was in the process of completing 34 passes for 356 yards in all, there was no question as to how SMU might try to get that touchdown. So Chuck bent down behind the center, and the Air Force went into its old 3-2-4-2 defense, or whatever it was that Ben Martin was using against the most unorthodox team in the land.

Hixson immediately hit Gary Hammond, a brilliant sophomore who has inherited Jerry Levias' job, for 19 yards. Then he hit Hammond again for three. He's on the Falcons' 27-yard line now, but, oops, there are just 10 seconds left. A completion short of the goal won't do. It has to be for six, or at least incomplete, in which case he'll get one more try. Out go the receivers—Tight End Ken Fleming, who's caught eight, Flanker Sammy Holden, who's caught eight, and Hammond, who's caught nine. And some other guys. Hixson drops back to throw, the scoreboard mentions miraclemakers again, the stadium erupts.

But Chuck doesn't throw. He keeps looking. And he never does throw because an Air Force end named Harold Whaley has looped outside and come around in back of him and wrestles him down, and everybody goes home. Which brought up the fact that this is something else SMU and Hixson may do this year—run for minus yardage. Alone, Hixson was caught eight times for −48, and the Falcons intercepted him three times, and while this was happening Gary Baxter, the more complete operator, was getting the Air Force 178 yards on the ground along with his 206 passing.

The game was lost, but Hixson has got "Excitement '69" off to the kind of start that SMU is accustomed to. They win some and lose some but everybody remembers the swell heart attack they suffered, in any case.

Had Hixson got the ball away and

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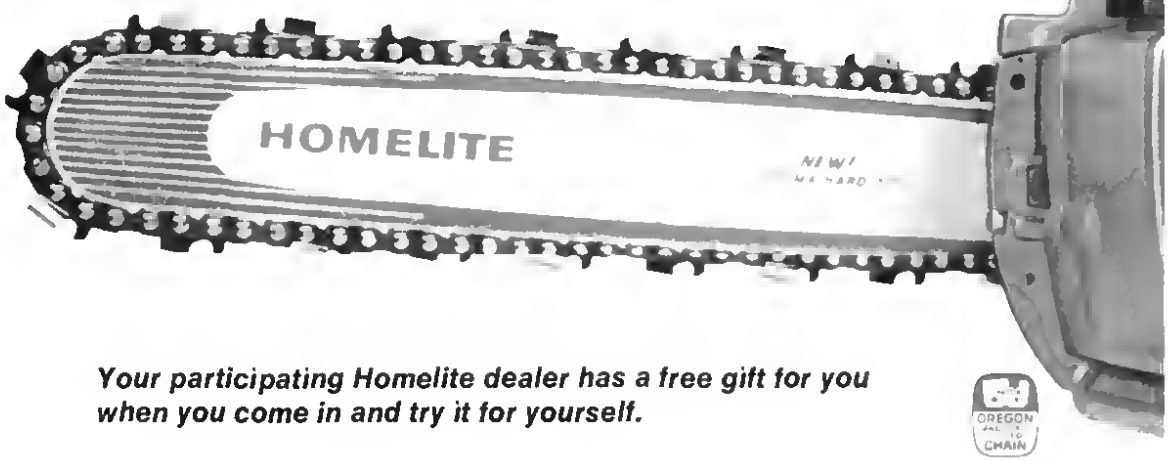

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had Hammond or Fleming grabbed it for a touchdown, SMU would have outscored the Air Force, but who would have had the better team? Interesting. One team—the Falcons—had played one game by all of the old-fashioned rules. But this other one, SMU, had been playing jai alai all night, or something like that, because Chuck Hixson has no other way to travel, and because SMU is not just playing college opponents every week in this new era, it is playing the Dallas Cowboys for the entertainment dollar.

When Hixson got to SMU two years ago the coaches weren't sure how tough he was. Could he take real punishment, the kind a guy receives when his protection pocket crumbles? Could he stand up to the rush repeatedly and always get up when he got stomped? They decided to play a little game that could have been called "get Hixson."

The game involved the assistant coaches forming a human wall behind him—behind the offensive backfield—during workouts. When Chuck would drift back to pass, the wall was there so he couldn't possibly escape the onward rush. He either got rid of the ball fast or he got buried. When he would appear to be retreating, the coaches would block him and even, at times, hurl him into the defenders. Hixson kept getting up.

"Spending a year as a red shirt will teach you a few things," Hixson said. "There's no question that it helped me learn to take it, but also to look for receivers—and quick."

Hayden Fry might be the only coach in America who won't use the triple option this year. Hixson, of course, is the reason. "If there is anything you need, it's a healthy quarterback," Fry said. "Hixson couldn't run the option anyhow. He's too slow, although he has run for some touchdowns. But I don't want him taking the punishment a quarterback takes with that offense."

Dedicated as he is to the passing game with Hixson this year (and next), Fry's workouts are not like anyone else's. He might spend a whole day rehearsing ways for Hixson to throw the team into the end zone from only eight yards out. Or he might spend another whole afternoon rehearsing ways for Chuck to hurl the Ponies out of their own territory. "Everything we do is based on one theory," said Fry. "We believe it's easier to throw for four yards than to run for four. At least with Chuck it is."

But there are many reasons why Hixson is already immortal and, given good health, will surely break every collegiate passing record there is. First, he can throw his passes in a variety of ways—soft, the nose of the ball up, or hard and flat. He also has the knack of being able to see many receivers all at once, like each and every one of the four or five hundred that the Mustangs send out on practically every play. SMU's alphabet offense spreads across the field like a marching band and then some, and Hixson has to stand back there and search across the entire horizon before he throws.

"Not too many years ago they said a passer had to be able to spot his secondary target," Fry explained. "For us, Hixson has to be able to find his third and fourth receivers, and no one could possibly do it better."

continued

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BEFORE AFTER

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The final thing is the matter of his quick release. Most passers have to step forward a little to get the ball away. Not Chuck. He barely moves his left foot, primarily, of course, because some angry lineman has a grasp on it. He just stands there or sways gently and, suddenly, flick. Hixson has shot the ball maybe 40 yards downfield, and right where he aimed it.

Of course, as already suggested, there is quite another thing that will help Hixson shatter the records; this offense that Fry is using, a total commitment to the pass. It started last year in SMU's first game when Hixson completed his first toss from his own end zone. That was against Auburn over in the Southeast where they don't do such things.

SMU was back on its three-yard line when it happened, and when he called the play his teammates looked at their sophomore general as if he'd maybe had his hat stepped on.

"We run it 50 times a day," Chuck said to his team. "It's what we believe in. Let's go." Whereupon he promptly hit 27 passes that day for 283 yards and little old, lowly, underrated, unrespected SMU—long-suffering since the days of Doak and Kyle—became one of the most exciting teams in football, Hixson completing his last pass of the season to upset Oklahoma in the Bluebonnet Bowl.

That one was probably funnier than his first against Auburn. Chuck had gone to the line of scrimmage and seen Oklahoma's two safeties looking him in the eye. He laughed to himself and did what he usually does, which is call an audible. It was a deep pass to Fleming. Just after he threw, he turned and started for the bench, knowing it was good. And it was.

"A pro coach told me how proud he was last year that his quarterback had called audibles for seven touchdowns," Fry said. "I just didn't have the heart to tell him that Chuck had called audibles for 11 touchdowns. That's how smart he is, along with everything else."

What Hixson does seems to be of far more importance than what SMU does because of the fun-and-thrill war that Hayden Fry feels obliged to wage with the professionals. If that is what college football is up to in its new century, SMU may be the first team to have discovered how to win while losing. **END**

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The official Used Car Guide is full of foregone conclusions.

THE LAST OF THE TITANS

By Alex Kroll

As the gun ended the 1969 Super Bowl, Larry Grantham, the New York Jets' linebacker, went into a spasm. Or was it a free-form dance? He quivered and leaped, sprinted and stopped dead, pirouetted, shook himself, sprinted again and jumped over the bench. All the while he was bellowing at the top of his lungs and pointing his right index finger to heaven. Isadora Duncan would have approved.

Grantham was in a frenzy. But it was understandable. His team was now No. 1 in pro football. Only a few years before it had been No. Last, the second team in a one-team town.

Grantham, Don Maynard, Curley Johnson and Bill Mathis had endured as the only leftovers from the Jets' predecessors, Harry Wismer's New York Titans. The Super Bowl payoff seems astonishing, considering that just seven years earlier this same Larry Grantham warned me about my first Titan paycheck, "Don't cash it with anybody you like." Larry's warning became the team slogan of the 1962 Titans. As "Run for daylight" used to mo-

continued

DRAWINGS BY ROBERT CUNNINGHAM

tivate the Packers, "Don't cash it with anybody you like" unmotivated us.

Perhaps you recall this last of Wismer's football teams. The bouncing paycheeks, the strikes and much else seem barely credible now. Yet only seven years ago Lee Grosscup, Hubert Bobo, Hayseed Stephens, Jim Tiller, Butch Songin and others of that cut carried the colors of the AFL in New York.

The Titans of '62 stand unchallenged as the worst-managed, most-unprofessional professional team of the modern era. We started working for that honor from the first day of training camp. We rallied in mid-July at East Stroudsburg (Pa.) State College. The school officials seemed surprised. Not once during that hot, dry summer had anybody watered the football field. (Had Harry told them we were coming?) Don Maynard's legs took six weeks to loosen up after sprinting on the concrete-hard surface.

There were other oddities. Sammy Baugh had been hired in 1960 as head coach, and his contract still had a year to run, but Harry announced to the press that Baugh had been demoted to "kicking consultant." The idea was that Sammy wouldn't show up and Harry wouldn't have to pay him. Sammy showed. In a more successful economy measure—and there were hundreds—Harry ordered George Sauer, the general manager, to become the backfield coach as well. That way, George was at the same time under and over the new head coach, Bulldog Turner.

What exactly was the chain of command? I was too much a rookie to know or care. I had the dubious honor of being the only draft choice Harry had signed. I was therefore entitled to a single room, but the spleen the veterans normally spread over all the rookies was devoted entirely to me. (When Defensive Tackle Dick Guesman broke my hand in a scrimmage he said, "Goddammit, I meant to break his arm.")

Still, the spirit at camp was pretty good. Harry had recently married the widow of Longy Zwillman, the New Jersey racketeer, and the team felt that Mrs. Zwillman's fortune would guarantee us financial security. Joe Foss, the AFL commissioner, who had had some well-publicized disputes with Harry during the '61 season, had stood as best man. So it appeared that the New York franchise had reconciled itself to the rest of the AFL. Or vice versa.

But the money problem raised its ugly head as soon as we swung West for our last exhibition game and the season opener at Oakland. Each player was supposed to receive $50 per exhibition game. The exhibition was played and lost with no sign of a check. We held our first team meeting and issued our first ultimatum. "No pay, no play," Curley Johnson said. It had a nice ring and it became our second team slogan.

However, we had got a bonus out West. Lee Grosscup, Al Dorow, the resident quarterback, had felt no affinity for Harry or for Bulldog and had been traded to Buffalo. Butch Songin, who had spent the '61 season with Boston, was on hand, but there was some concern about Butch's age (38), his stamina, his play calling and his passing. Interestingly, he was called Rag Arm by his teammates.

Grosscup, 13 years younger, showed up two days before the Oakland game. He had already been traded by the Giants and cut by the Vikings. His long mod hair and semi-hippie ways were six years ahead of the time, but our club decided to suspend judgment. We already possessed the two best wide receivers in the league, Don Maynard and Art Powell. Dick Christy and Mel West, at running back, had big-league credentials. Grantham was an all-league linebacker. And the offensive line had been known to throw serious blocks on occasion. A young, strong-armed quarterback might make us a contender. (Seriously, the team had never finished worse than 7-7.) So while we grimaced as Grosscup called plays "on the deuce" or "on the trey," we were all pulling for him.

But Bulldog started Butch because he knew more offensive plays. When the Raiders—surely the worst *playing* team in the league—intercepted two Songin softies, Bulldog raced Grosscup into the lineup. Although he knew little of the Turner system, he and Art Powell had played in a high school All-Star Game together. Grosscup's first play was a variation on a 1954 Santa Monica High School pass. Eighty yards—50 in the air. Touchdown to Powell!

Grosscup's second call was equally magical. A 19-yard pass to Dick Christy and another touchdown. His third touchdown pass iced a 28–17 win for us. Grosscup was ecstatic. So was the ball club. We stood 1-0, and we had our dreams. Not even the absence of paychecks could dampen them.

Two days later morale took a sudden turn for the worse. Harry telephoned from New York and ordered full pads for all workouts before the San Diego game. The Titans had never beaten the Chargers, and after our big win at Oakland, Harry could smell blood.

All we smelled was sweat. The second week in September was a boiler in San Diego. The temperature hit 90° every morning and worked up from there. Our practice field, 45 minutes by bus from the motel, could have been a training ground for the Afrika Korps—a high school field in a natural bowl, the clay baked solid. No blade of grass had ever shown its head there. The trip over was not too uncomfortable. But the return trip was something else. Yet a smelly bus is better than no bus at all.

After practice on Friday the bus didn't return for us. At first we deluded ourselves into thinking it was late. An hour later we faced the truth. A few of the veterans had already commandeered the cars of some high school girls who had been watching practice. Bulldog also defected. At the first scent of trouble he leaped into a sportswriter's car and yelled that he'd see us back at the pool. An hour later 25 or so Titans, dragging their pads, helmets and shoes behind them, trudged to the nearest main road.

The sight of 25 shoeless professional football players hitching rides through suburban San Diego was my first indication that the situation might be out of control. Bulldog reasoned the opposite—that the bus that never came (because the bus company hadn't been paid) was a boon to team spirit. "It makes you guys pull together," he said.

If so, it didn't show on Sunday. In the 90° heat at Balboa Stadium the Chargers performed a sort of mass execution. Grosscup, who had only been with us nine days, had already lost his touch. By his own admission, he called his all-time worst game. But our offensive linemen were the real villains. The Chargers' Ron Nery and Ernie Ladd laughed their way through the pass-blocking. It ended 40–14, but not before I got my big chance. Nery, at defensive right end, spent 2½ quarters practicing his outside move on Jack Klotz, our left tackle. Klotz had a

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The author, Alex Kroll, an All-America center at Rutgers and a member of the 1962 Titans, is a vice-president with Young & Rubicam.

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TITANS *continued*

bad leg, and Nery was beating him. Bulldog called for Roger Ellis as a replacement. We carried seven offensive linemen, Roger being the second-string guard and tackle and me being the second-string center and guard. On his second play, Roger absorbed a blood-clotting kick on the calf and limped out. Now guess who?

"Me?" I said to Bulldog. "I never played tackle in my life."

"Christ, the score's 31–0," Bulldog said to me. "What difference can that make?"

Perhaps Nery had got tired from running around Klotz. Perhaps my absolute ignorance confused him. Whatever it was, I managed to keep Nery off Grosscup's back for the last quarter, while we scored twice. The next week Klotz and I split the game at tackle. And the next week Bulldog cut Klotz, who immediately made the team at San Diego. So, at 233 pounds, I became the proud owner of offensive left tackle. I owned it but I didn't know what to do with it. The team had no money for an offensive line coach.

Turner's Titans returned home. And went on strike. After dragging our duffel bags up three flights of stairs and sitting on the floor to watch game films because there were no chairs, the player representatives called a team meeting.

"The league rule," Guard Bob Mischak, our co-captain said, "clearly states that paychecks have to be delivered within 24 hours after a game." He looked at his watch. "Our paychecks are now 194 hours overdue."

We delivered our ultimatum to the coaches—"No pay, no play." They passed it on to Wismer, who exploded and delivered an ultimatum of his own. He forbade the coaches to coach and threatened to put the entire team on waivers. Bulldog passed the word. "Mr. Wismer said he'll fire us if we coach or even talk to you guys," he said. "But I'm not worried. You're professionals. You got pride. You know what to do."

"What?" someone said.

We sat on our equipment for several hours, playing cards, smoking. The truth is, a football player feels orphaned without his coach, and not practicing is a little like missing Mass on Sunday. Gradually the opinion grew that we ought to practice. Grantham and Mischak took charge. They suggested we all get dressed in sweat suits and get down to the field.

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Once there, the quarterbacks of the week worked out a game plan. It was the most spirited practice we had all season. The next day Harry paid up, and that Saturday we went out and beat Buffalo 17–6. "Let's get rid of the coaches for good" became the slogan of the week. "Let's stop practicing altogether" was another.

The Titans now stood 2 and 1 as we faced our home opener with the Denver Broncos. And the turning point of our season, Grosscup had survived the San Diego defensive line, but he couldn't survive our scrimmages that week. Traditionally pro clubs stop scrimmaging after the first regular-season game. Harry never let us stop. And we inflicted some awful damage on each other. Damage we might have saved for Denver.

Grosscup started the game with sprained ligaments. His mobility was so reduced that Bulldog had to resort to Songin. Butch moved the club fitfully, and with the score 13–10, their favor, we stood at the Denver nine-yard line on last down. The next scene, as the camera caught it, represented the turning point of the season. Had we scored and gone on to win we might never have known how bad we really were. Somehow winning and the confidence it brings breeds better performances. As it turned out, Butch's performance in the next nine seconds bred something else.

At the snap of the ball the left side of our line—myself, Mischak and the tight end—did something totally unexpected. We flattened the entire right side of the Broncos' defensive line. Then we managed to shove them into a leg-tangled mass and lay upon them, pummeling our helmets and elbows into the massed flesh. Meanwhile our flanker, Art Powell, slanted from left to right and cleared the left flat. Butch rolled out to the left. Imagine the scene. Butch Songin, 38 years old, standing 15 yards from the left sideline on the Denver 10 and no Bronco on his feet within 25 yards of him in any direction. Nobody stood between Butch and the goal line.

What would you have done? Butch stood in place, pumping his arm, waiting for an open receiver. For nine seconds! (We all counted each time we saw the film.) Butch was not one for improvisation. ("A pass play is a pass play," as he once said.) Finally, when the opposite side linebacker had run the width of the field to press him, Butch gunned a desperation pass, a line drive that bounced four yards in front of Don Maynard.

The Broncos screen-passed their way to a 19–10 lead. At this point Harry took formal control of the game. He ordered Bulldog to insert Dean Look at quarterback. Dean, like Wismer, came from Michigan State, and he had played quarterback in a running offense. (Harry once told me that he himself had barely missed gridiron greatness in college. "If I could've only passed or run I would've been an All-America quarterback," he said.) Dean Look could run all right, but not pass. It didn't take the Broncos long to find that out. Whenever Look rolled out he always ran. It had worked in college. Here it got him several broken vertebrae.

Naturally, we lost this game, but not before a new Titan hero began to emerge. Jim Tiller, at 5′ 8″ and 165 pounds, became the darling of Mrs. Wismer and the rest of Harry's section. A bullfighter being chased by 11 bulls was the way they described him. Jim was not big, but then again he wasn't that shifty. He did the 100 in 9.6, but his hands seemed to be made of concrete. Passes floated to him, but he batted them all away. With all these gifts, Tiller's scrambles for survival added a certain spice to our otherwise lackluster performances. And word was constantly coming from on high to insert him into the game. Our quarterbacks were never ecstatic about Jim and his pass-blocking. And eventually, in Houston, it was Tiller's man, a linebacker, who gave the coup de grace to Grosscup's knee.

After the loss to hapless Denver public interest in the Titans waned. We felt it acutely at our next outing, which was against Boston at the Polo Grounds on

Wismer's financial picture was so blighted that only one teller was authorized to cash Titan paychecks

the prematurely wintry night of Oct. 5. As we flat-footed down the rickety steps to the field, our cleats made a strange, loud, clicking sound. Grantham and Mischak led the charge, and we sprinted briskly the length of the field. But we all shared a strange sensation, a nebulous feeling that all was not well. The two captains barked out the cadence for the exercises, and it had a curious hollow ring. As we broke to go into our various drills, I remember stopping dead in my tracks. Mike Hudock, the offensive center, bumped right into my back. "What the hell's the matter?" he said.

"Look," I said, "up in the stands."

There, standing at attention, spaced about 10 yards apart, all through the stands, were the concessionaires in their orange suits. They were alone. Nobody else had come to the game.

Suddenly, at the opposite end of the stadium, I saw a large group assembled. "There, somebody's coming in now," I said. But it was only the Patriots.

Back in the locker room after the warmups, Grantham made an original suggestion. "Instead of running through the goalposts for introductions," he said, "let's just go up and shake hands with everybody. It would be faster. It won't take more than one or two minutes."

Eventually the gates were opened, and every kid off the block was cajoled into filling up some of the 52,000 vacant seats. Next morning the papers, in recalling our 14–43 loss, noted that the attendance was "reported to be 15,000." After that it appeared that Harry multiplied each game's real attendance by three. But the base included the thousands of kids off the block who were let in free just before kickoff. It became sort of a tradition. Prior to the opening whistle, we'd hear a tremendous scream as thousands of kids stormed through the stands, tripping over seats and a few people.

While the kids off the block sat on the 50-yard line, the players' wives, compliments of Harry, were seated high in the left coffin corner. Another economy measure. (Still another economy measure was not paying East Stroudsburg State Teachers College for our training facilities.) Of course, this scene took place early in the season. In late season even the lure of free 50-yard-line seats failed. The kids had stopped coming.

The newspapers began to have great fun with the inflated attendance figures. One of the best: "The announced attendance of 20,000 refers to arms and legs. Or else 15,000 of the 20,000 people came disguised as empty seats."

This lack of revenue made us the last of the one-projector teams. Pro football game films are exchanged in two parts. One reel shows the opponent's defensive plays, the other, the offensive plays. Being limited to one projector, half the club had to wait in the chill locker room, dozing, freezing, shooting craps, while the other unit huddled around the faint glow of the projector in a musty, broken-floored anteroom.

Naturally our Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings at the movies took twice the normal time. The management's refusal to buy a second projector was an economy measure. Thus when the projector broke before our next game in Houston, it was not surprising that no one would pay to get it fixed. The whole week became a nightmare of anticipation. "What kind of offense do they run?" John Dell Isola, our defensive line coach, inquired. "It's like ours, only better," came the predictable answer. Bulldog Turner, as head thinker, thumbed through an old Houston program, studying the personnel. "Anybody ever play against this guy Frazier?" he said. "He's a split end—or a flanker." Somebody had and volunteered that Frazier was fast. "He's fast then," Bulldog noted, and advised the defense to write down that telling information.

After losing to the Oilers 56–17 we got ready for Dallas. Here to combat the champion-to-be Texans, Bulldog devised a novel training tactic. He concluded from the Houston result that we were overtrained, so he cut practice sessions in half. The projector also made a historic recovery after a bulb transplant. But Grosscup and I, who had intestinal flu, didn't. I huddled in the dark of my hotel room unable to eat or drink anything more solid than water. I rose only for our abbreviated practice sessions. We were bused to an old baseball park, where we messed around for about 40 minutes. But Bulldog prepared mentally. He devised a new play for this game, appropriately called The Dallas Special. Curiously the Dallas Cowboys run it to this day. It's merely a quick, flat pass to a stationary back set about 15 yards wide of the nearest lineman. From there, a fellow like Bob Hayes has the room to break the pass for a long gain. Of course, Bob Hayes was not with us that day. In his place we had Jim Tiller. Who could not catch. Who was smaller than Hayes but not as shifty. And then again not as fast.

I personally felt exactly like a pro football player who hasn't had contact with anything stronger than toast and tea for six days. But at 214 pounds I did feel quick. I felt like I was running in a fog, but luckily also felt impervious to pain. Nothing my opponent might hit me with could make me feel any worse. The unreality increased as we got a three-point lead. God knows why. The Dallas Special was picking up zero yardage. The Texans, seeing us gain on real football plays, dismissed it as an accident. The second and third series they went into a mild panic. They thought they were four touchdowns better than we, and being tied at halftime 10–10 seemed to crack their poise.

Between halves ABC-TV called me out of the dressing room early for my one and only interview on national television. I'd been planning a snappy statement for some time. But the unreal game situation, with the Titans in contention and me playing about 30,000 feet over my head, had left me in a daze. "What a difference," Paul Christman said. "Alex, how can a team be beaten so badly one week and come back and look like a totally different club seven days later?" A terrific question. Under calmer circumstances I could have done an hour on that one but, shaken as I was, trying to flex my muscles to fill out my pads, which were sized for somebody 26 pounds heavier, I was struck dumb. Finally I managed to offer my one and only pearl to the football fans of the nation. "Well," I said, faking a slight drawl, "this week we got a lot more jiniger." Jiniger! One *jiniger*, and Christman, looking cross-eyed, said, "Well, back to you, Curt."

Since Dallas scored in the last 51 seconds to win 20–17, our record was 2 and 5. Harry and Bulldog became desperate. Each Tuesday from this point on the roster changed radically. New white hopes and black hopes, freshly cut from the NFL or dredged up from the United League, arrived at the Polo Grounds. Some, like Ed Kovac, Johnny Green and Bob Scrabis, had been cut by the Titans before. (Kovac was cut and rehired five times.) But most were nameless fringe players, called from the darkness of the Newark Bears or someplace. Who knows where they all came

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TITANS *continued*

from? They trooped into the locker room on Tuesday and most often disappeared by the following Tuesday. Without a trace. Without a comment by the coaches. Without even shaking hands.

Home from our near miss at Dallas, we found that our locker room had deteriorated. Heretofore we had clean jocks, socks and towels, and sweat suits were laundered on a regular basis. And if you dumped your gear on the floor, some elf picked it up. Nick Torman, autocrat of the clubhouse for the Titans, supplied shaving gear and other toiletries so a man might refurbish himself after practice. In return, each player tipped Torman $10 a week. With the bouncing of each passing paycheck, with no security that we would be paid at all in the future, it became harder and harder to dig up the 10 bucks. One week Nick's kitty came up empty.

Nick no longer supplied shaving cream. The blades and the elves disappeared. Sweat suits stayed overnight wherever they were thrown. Day after day we had to rely on the same musty towels, as our well-publicized indebtedness made laundries leery of Titan checks. Clean socks were available for games only. The showers turned cold. I began to shower at home. The locker-room floor was littered with broken glass. The mirrors over the sink became crusted with old shaving cream spelling out obscenities.

Our locker room had become the Tobacco Road of pro football. Where most clubs carry two trainers and several assistants, little Buddy Leininger carried the whole burden on his slopy shoulders. Tape ran low. It was like living under siege. Buddy had to set priorities as to who had the right to be taped before practice. Backs and ends first, linemen to the rear.

Few players trusted Buddy. He was rumored to be Bulldog's spy, and we thought of him as part of management. He played this role to perfection. He stood near the head coach whenever possible and even looked like a shrunken version of Bulldog. Barely five feet tall, Buddy bore the same paunch and he smoked the same big cigar. "Don't talk around Buddy" was the latest warning. So the New York Titans, by the eighth week of the season, had just about stopped being a team. The players distrusted the coaches. And Buddy. And Harry. The coaches distrusted Harry. We broke into mutually distrusting cliques.

At the bottom of this morass was the money problem. Being a professional has something to do with money. For example, one cold November day at the Polo Grounds the team was orphaned by the entire coaching staff. Wismer's financial picture had become so blighted that only one teller at one branch of the Irving Trust Company (at 39th Street and Madison Avenue) was authorized to cash Titan paychecks. As each player submitted his check, this teller subtracted the sum from Harry's balance. When he reached zero, which might be quickly if the quarterbacks and flankers got there first, he shut up shop. "First come, first served" was his consolation to latecomers.

On this particular day none of us had seen any real money for several weeks. But we practiced as usual. Suddenly Defensive End Ed Cooke noticed that the coaching staff had disappeared. "My God!" he shouted. "Paychecks!" With an animal roar we stampeded from our formations, scrambled up the rickety steps into the locker room, and there, sure enough, stood George Sauer, holding a stack of pay envelopes. Madness. Every man for himself. Skinny backs to the rear. Big linemen first. As each man received his check he made his break for the 155th Street subway entrance, depending upon his indebtedness and his personal-hygiene habits. Some showered and dressed in street clothes. Some merely dressed. Some just threw raincoats over their sweat suits and changed shoes. Then came the great race to 39th Street. The coaching staff probably had got a two-or-three-subway-stop head start on us, but nearly everyone received real money that day.

The Saturday before the second San Diego game the rumor moved from locker to locker that Harry was offering $100 extra per man for each touchdown we beat the Chargers by. Harry still smarted from the 40–14 television drubbing San Diego had inflicted on the Coast. The Chargers were not quite the same team this day. They had suffered a series of injuries to key people, and I don't think they really took us seriously. The defensive line had eaten us up a month before, and the Chargers looked like five-touchdown favorites to the oddsmakers. Finally, the bad-check situation had led to a domestic disturbance between my pregnant wife and me, which led to her

continued

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refusal to cook a steak at 9:30 in the morning. (Pregame meals were not supplied by the club.) "I cannot stand the smell of steak at 9:30 a.m." was the way my wife put it. So I ended up eating my pregame meal in Ed Dwyer's saloon in Newark. Hanging around the morning drinking crowd did nothing for my mental preparation.

In short, the omens were bad. In the locker room bennies were passed as usual. With the tight money situation the price had inflated to 50¢ a capsule. On the surface morale seemed normal. That is, nonexistent. But way down deep the thought of $100 a touchdown churned along with Ed Dwyer's french-fried onion rings. Ron Nery, the right defensive end, was my man. He had one move and one move only. He charged quickly to the outside and then grabbed shoulder pads. If he got the tackle off-balance, he'd spring around him. I felt like a real pro knowing all that in advance, forgetting how humiliating it had been learning it. Nery and I squared off in the dust. The turf was long gone at the Polo Grounds, and nobody could afford to replace it or even to have the ground crew do more than line the field.

Both clubs shared the problem of playing on hard clots of earth, which had been chewed up in a rain game and baked into place by the sun. Both moved mechanically through the first period. Suddenly an interference penalty put us into Charger territory. Although we could only squeeze a field goal out of the drive, a frenzied spirit took hold of us. The idea of beating the Chargers became a real possibility. The off-field platoon stood screaming encouragement.

The half ended 3–3, and it was apparent that the Chargers had lost their poise. It happens occasionally when a superior team, by a series of freakish circumstances, is held even by a lightly regarded opponent. Then the better team is tempted to break from its traditional pattern of play. It tries massive retaliation. It's the sin of pride. Beating us was not sufficient, they had to slaughter us for the sake of their own pride. The Chargers went to the safety blitz.

Johnny Green, a quarterback from Chattanooga, had been recalled from limbo when Grosscup was injured. Every time the safety sneaked toward the line of scrimmage Green switched to the 80 audible—a quick slant pass to Maynard in the safety's vacant zone. Maynard, unhamstrung for the first time all year, left the Chargers eating dust. Literally. Huge dust clouds rose from the grassless field as Maynard zoomed in, took the pass and sprinted downfield. The Charger line spent the afternoon watching Green throw from a frustrating five or six yards away. Our backs knocked the safety blitzers silly. Maynard scored twice and Dick Christy ran a punt back all the way. That day, Oct. 28, 1962, stands as the high point of Titanic achievement. We beat San Diego 23–3. Nothing could dampen our newfound pride. Not even Harry, who failed to come up with a single $100 bill. Or even the regular paychecks. Instead, he installed Mrs. Wismer as president of the club. Presumably the money was now her problem. In spite of the management we rolled over Oakland seven days later, to give us a 4-5 record. And the Texans were due in New York next.

We were confident we could beat Dallas. We'd come within 51 seconds of tying them on their home field. But for that game Bulldog had refrained from coaching. This time he really got involved, which was more his style. Nonetheless the Texans carried a mere 28–20 lead into the locker room at halftime. Defense was not our strong suit.

In the second half we played them dead-even for a few seconds. Then on third down, from the 50, Len Dawson overthrew his receiver right in front of our bench. "Offensive interference!" Bulldog bellowed. And he stomped onto the field. Enraged, he smashed his hat into the turf, stepped on it, kicked it, roared at the officials and in general lived up to his nickname. The referee penalized him—and us—to the 35. Which gave Dallas a first down. Now Bulldog pulled out all the stops. Steam seemed to rise from his wet forehead. He ricocheted curses off the bleachers. He jumped over an imaginary skip rope, flailed his crumpled hat and shook his fist—all of which added up to 15 more yards and put the Texans at the 20, with another first down. Instead of fourth down at midfield, Dallas had first down at our 20. The defense collapsed. The idea of having stopped Dallas and the insanity of walking backward 30 yards had done them in. Final score: Dallas 52, Titans 31.

Eleven days later we took on the Broncos in Denver and beat them 46–45. We stood 5 and 6, and we were to play the Patriots in Boston next Friday night. Several weeks previously a succession of whiskey bottles had been cracked on the Texans' helmets when they had played in Boston. We were warned to keep our hats on and were told that the Patriot fans had developed a new goal-line defense. Dallas had moved inside the Boston 10 late in the game. On fourth down Dawson dropped back to pass and spotted Fred Arbanas open in the left corner of the end zone. Then, the game films revealed, a black shadow streaked between the passer and the receiver. Dawson stopped in midthrow. By the time he cocked again Arbanas was covered and the pass was incomplete. The dimness of the lights at that end zone made positive identification impossible, but it was certain that Boston had 12 men on the field for a second or two. The one wearing a long black overcoat was not on the roster.

Our game with Boston must go down in history as signaling the end of the locker-room speech, oldstyle. The impassioned pregame rhetoric that had been developed by Bill Roper at Princeton and Knute Rockne at Notre Dame had passed like a torch to Tad Jones, Frank Leahy, Bear Bryant, and so on. The torch was extinguished forever when it reached the hands of Harry Wismer. The team bus picked us up in front of The Kenmore hotel in Boston. George Sauer climbed on and said, "Let's go." The bus driver refused to release the emergency brake. "Not until I'm paid," he said. "Cash." To prove his reasonableness he also said, "I don't have to have the round-trip fare. Just one way." Sauer looked at the players, but we sat on our wallets. Disgusted, he returned to the hotel to cash a check. Here again he had trouble. The cashier had grave suspicions about Wismer's money. The bus, of course, was in bedlam. Whatever pregame tension anybody might have felt had been dissipated. From this point on the Patriot game became a lark. To say the team was loose is to give us too much credit for gravity. Somewhere George came up with the cash. "Now, let's go," he ordered. The driver started the motor. Just then, a rap, rap, rapping came at the team bus door. It was Harry. He clambered up the steps, and it was apparent that he had spiced his pregame meal with a generous amount of gin. With him, being dragged by the left arm and looking terribly embar-

continued

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TITANS *continued*

rassed, was his wife, the ex-widow of Zwillman. Harry surveyed his unpaid team.

"Fellas," he began momentously, "this has been a rotten season." He paused to see if that had sunk in. "It's been a rotten season," he repeated, "but it's not over yet."

The ex-Mrs. Zwillman squirmed. The bus driver revved the motor.

"But today," Harry said, making a flourish with his free arm, "is my wife's birthday. And I want you to win this one for her."

Nobody laughed. Nobody said anything. Harry took his wife off the bus and disappeared into the Kenmore. Few of us ever saw him again.

We took the field in high spirits. We felt like we were playing a pickup game. No pressure. Play for laughs. Which is almost how I'd played tackle all year. By this time I weighed only 216 pounds, light even for a running back. Out of plain fear or desire to survive, I worked out my own theory of blocking. On the first pass of the game I determined to block for an end run. "That'll confuse 'em," I told Mischak. Mischak was doubtful. On the snap count I fired out, chugging my legs, trying with all my might to block Larry Eisenhauer into the middle of the line. Eisenhauer, all the while, could see what looked like a straight drop-back pass developing in the backfield. But he wasn't completely sure. He had to protect, for a second and a half, against the remote possibility of a run. By that time even if he stepped right over me he couldn't get to the quarterback.

Next pass play I blocked straight up in the classic style. Then my ultimate block, the runaway pass block. Against all logic, when the ball was snapped I turned and ran straight backward about four yards, stopped and turned back to the line. The sheer stupidity of this move held Larry in wonder for a split second. So it went. By a random combination of run blocking, runaway blocking, pass-blocking, tripping, cutting and holding, I managed to keep my man in check on most passes. Not all.

While we improvised like mad sandlotters, completing long passes on fourth-and short-yardage situations, the Patriots came in tense and we led 10–3 at the half. "Stay loose," Grantham warned. He knew that if we started taking ourselves seriously we'd blow it. But we

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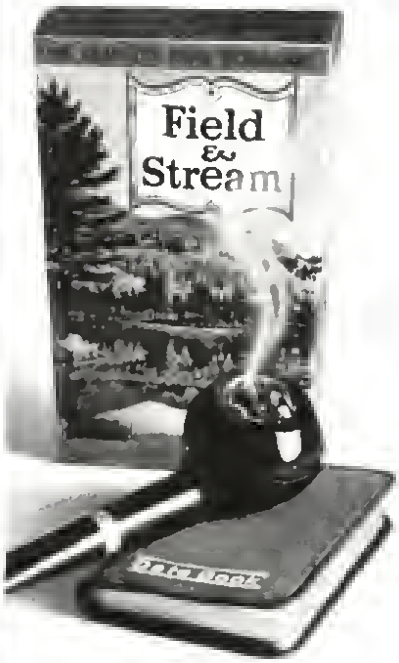

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did blow it. Because we stopped taking *them* seriously.

We were leading 17–10 in the fourth quarter when Curley Johnson backed into the end zone to punt. He took the snap, stepped forward and was struck by inspiration. Though he is not too shifty, nor fast, he took off around right end. And almost made the line of scrimmage. We lost to Boston 24–17, and the next week Buffalo beat us 20–3. The Titan-Wismer combine was only one game—vs. the Oilers—from being over.

The league had undertaken the responsibility for paying us, so it looked like Harry would lose the franchise. Bulldog began to talk with the air of a man standing under a sword. Still he urged us to make a last great effort for the Houston game. "This is the final game of the season," he pointed out rightly. "There probably won't even be any New York Titans next year. So most of you are playing in your ast pro game. Most of you aren't good enough to p'ay anywhere else." So much for the pep talk. While there was considerable truth in Bulldog's speech, it seemed inappropriate only five minutes before kickoff.

The playing field had been frozen all week, and the Oilers, who could afford them, wore sneakers. We took the field in nongripping cleats. Despite the 20° temperature almost 2,000 people had wandered in. They watched the Oilers sneaker to our 25-yard line. From the 35, George Blanda threw into the left flat, trying for a first down. Wayne Fontes, playing his first game since chipping an anklebone on Thanksgiving, intercepted and chugged 84 yards down the sideline for the score. Delirium. 7–0. You Guys' favor. (Sometimes we called ourselves the You Guys, which was derived from Bulldog's habit of yelling, "Hey, you guys, come over here!")

The Oilers sneakered back and tied the score. The temperature began to drop. People began to leave. Johnny Green hobbled back to pass, but Fred Glick intereepted and set up the second Oiler score. The game froze in place at 14–7. Then Fontes intercepted another pass and, with Grosscup and Green alternating, giving us one good knee out of a possible four at quarterback, we moved inside their 30. Bill Shockley booted a field goal to make it 14–10.

At 15°, the Oilers' joints must have locked in place, because our defense held them to a field goal. A few minutes lat-

continued

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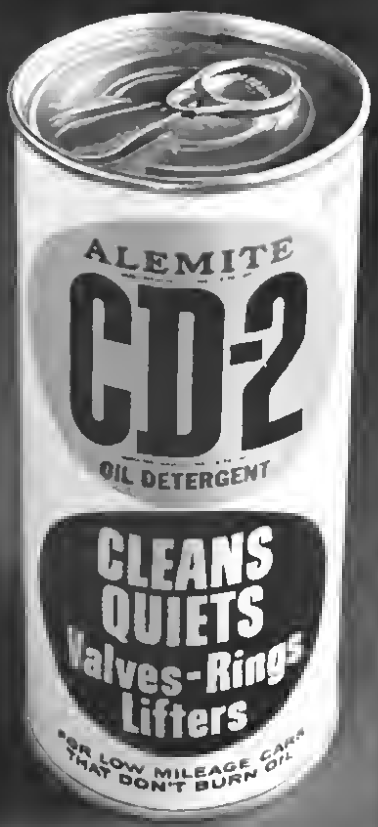

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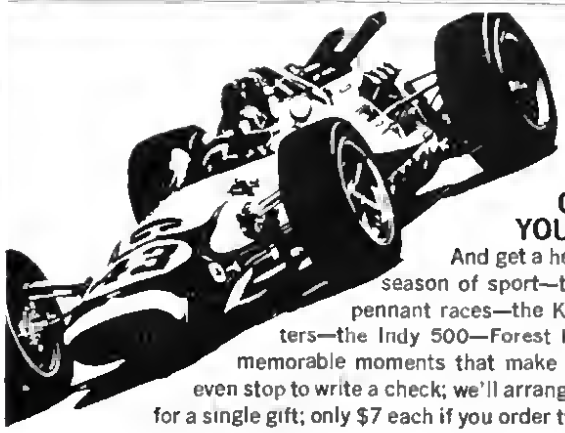

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er we had the ball at midfield. Green called a left flat pass to Art Powell. My job was to box out the right defensive end and then drift out and cover the flat in case the pass was intercepted. Which it was. Green's pass died about 10 yards short of Powell and hit Freddy Glick smack in the midsection. Glick and I took off on a collision course. The Oilers formed a wall of blockers for him five or six yards from the sideline, but I slipped behind them. Glick picked up momentum. I picked up momentum. We seemed to be charging through a tunnel toward each other. Then, just as I turned my head—the wrong way—to take him on my right shoulder, Glick decided to hell with it. He cut to the sideline to go out of bounds. His knee drilled my head back into my shoulder pads. I felt like a turtle. Then, for about 25 seconds, I napped on the frozen mud. I remember being dumped on a stretcher, but I felt detached from the whole scene. From football. From the game. From the Titans.

By the time my head had cleared the score had gone to 38–10, Houston's favor. And since Dr. James Nicholas, the team's orthopedic consultant, was testing me for a broken neck, I got to sit out the entire second half.

The final day of Titan football ended with the score 44–10 favor Oilers and 50 to 75 onlookers present, not including the two teams. Still there seemed to be a small personal consolation for coming to the park that day. The game had been billed as the last ever in the Polo Grounds. Shea Stadium was supposed to be ready for the Mets' opening day in April. So I had seen the end of a historic ball park. The Polo Grounds, where John McGraw and Bill Terry, Tuffy Leemans and Charlie Conerly had built legends, had seen its last legend. Us. And for myself, I would be the last man ever carried out of the Polo Grounds on a stretcher. It was a record of sorts.

But the completion of Shea Stadium was delayed a whole year. Early the next spring the Mets' Rod Kanehl ran into the outfield wall and had to be carried out. So even this consolation for playing with the Titans was not to be granted. It came later. To Grantham, Maynard, Johnson and Mathis in the Super Bowl. To the rest of us in the secure knowledge that we had been the last major league team to play almost entirely for laughs. END

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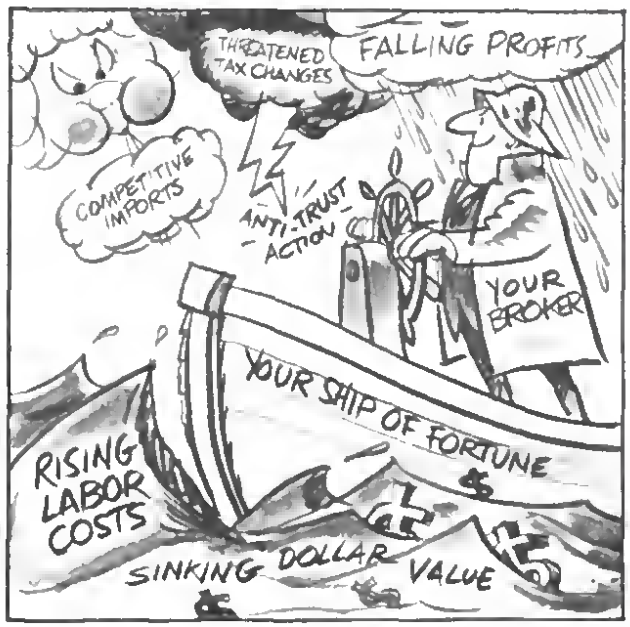

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Hennessy V S O P Grande Fine Champagne Cognac 80 Proof. ©Schieffelin & Co . N Y.

A Posh Game in a Posh Town

It was precisely the proper setting for the first international polo match in the U.S.: exclusive Newport, R.I. in 1886 **by JOHN HANLON**

Fittingly for its reputation as an aristocratic game, the first international polo match in North America was played in 1886 at Newport, R.I., then in its heyday as the favorite resort of high society. The match was between the Hurlingham Club of England and New York's Westchester Polo Club.

The arrangements for the event were made by Griswold Lorillard of the tobacco family, who had homes both in New York City and Newport. He had been a dinner guest one evening that June at the Hurlingham clubhouse in Fulham, near London, and mentioned that polo was played, and played rather well, in the U.S. This caused a certain insular surprise among his hosts. Hurlingham was, so to speak, the supreme headquarters of polo and had not yet heard that its game had reached the emigrants. The club officers suggested that perhaps they could send over a team to play the Americans if suitable financial arrangements could be made.

In Lorillard's set financial arrangements could always be made. The minutes of the Westchester Polo Club's meeting of June 4, 1886, in the firm, round hand of F. Gray Griswold, the club secretary-treasurer, records:

"Letter received from T. Shaw Safe, Hurlingham Club, England, asking whether we could arrange for a match with team from England and what we could propose toward their expenses. The secretary was instructed to inform Mr. Safe that . . . we would gladly play them in August and would land five members, five servants, five grooms in New York and return them to Liverpool, paying all freight and passages."

The terms met with British approval. Subsequently the Westchester Polo Club elected to put up a cup, costing $1,000, to be emblematic of the championship of the two countries. The best two-of-three matches were to be played at the club's summer grounds in Newport starting the last week of August—at the very peak of Newport's season.

Newport's brilliant, pleasure-fraught days and evenings, as Henry James termed them, began usually at noon, with the gathering of the cottagers at Newport Casino. There, to the scrapings of Mullaly's String Orchestra, off somewhere behind the potted palms, the elite strolled the Horseshoe Piazza and the tennis grounds, exchanging gossip of last night's gala, planning lunch and afternoon diversions and, of course, the evening's schedule.

Dinner was at 8 if one was going elsewhere afterward, 9 if nothing additional was arranged. Galas began at midnight and ended at dawn, if then. And hostesses vied with one another to stage spectaculars, such as unloosing thousands of butterflies at the height of dinner or having a silver bucket and shovel at each place setting so that guests, on signal, could dig for jewels buried in a sandpile that ran down the center of the table. One cottager, Mrs. Pembroke Jones, used to say that she always set aside $300,000 at the beginning of every Newport season just for entertaining. Some thought she was scrimping.

Sports were large among the daily diversions. In addition to the usual tennis week—involving the national championship—the golf, the fishing, the horse show and the like, the summer of 1886 offered another America's Cup race, preceded by trials in which four American contenders battled for the privilege of defending against the British challenger *Galatea*, and, of course, the new and perhaps most posh entry, international polo.

The American team was chosen in a weirdly complicated system of balloting by club members. Thomas Hitchcock was named captain. He was the most experienced of American polo players, having played the game while attending Oxford. The other players were Foxhall Keene, Raymond Belmont, Edwin K. Morgan and William K. Thorn Jr.

The British players, Hurlingham members all, were army officers, with the exception of the team captain, John Watson, a polo buff supreme who had recently returned from India, where he had gone simply to play polo, and the team substitute T. Shaw Safe. The other team members: Captain the Hon R. Lawley, 7th Hussars, Captain T. Hone, 9th Hussars, and Captain Malcolm Little, 7th Hussars.

The British group sailed on the Cunard steamship *Servia* on Aug. 7 and had an extremely rough crossing. Their 15 ponies had been placed upon the National Line's *Erin*, sailing at an earlier date, and that vessel encountered relatively good weather. On their arrival at Newport, the players took lodging at the Ocean House Hotel, the town's best, of course, and "were at once the cynosure of neighboring eyes," in the view of *Field*, a London magazine.

The first polo match was scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 24, at 4 p.m. By 3 o'clock the three main roads to Izzard's Field were jammed with all manner of conveyance: at least a dozen four-in-hand coaches, many park phaetons, barouches, buggies, curricles, carryalls, jumpers of every style, men and women on horseback and even mobs on foot. Most of the last named were the townspeople, off for the appropriately named Dead Head Hill, which overlooked Izzard's Field.

Below them, a Providence *Journal* reporter wrote, "was a sight never before witnessed, even in gay Newport . . . The attendance composed the entire assemblage of wealth, beauty, culture and fashion which Newport's summer population can boast, and that is not small." The Union Jack and the American flag were displayed on poles near the clubhouse, along with the club flags of the participants—yellow for Westchester, blue for Hurlingham. Mullaly's Orchestra was present and playing, the clubhouse porch was filled and the fleet of spectator vehicles was drawn up two and three rows deep at the east side and south end of the field. The moment was at hand in precisely the proper setting.

But then a small unpleasantness arose. The British captain, John Watson, protested what he considered a variance in the method of officiating. As customary, each side had named an umpire to work the match, and above them, functioning as sort of the court of last appeal, was the referee, in this case

continued

an American, S Howland Robbins Jr.

Watson's complaint was that Robbins should take his post in a stand at the field's edge and not, as he was for this day, on horseback. It seemed a thoroughly minor point to the Americans, hardly more than a technicality, but not to Watson. He notified the committee that his team "positively would refuse to play" if the change was not made. This put the committee in something of a bind, for here they were, with the clan gathered, their club and selves caught with transportation expenses of several thousand dollars, not to mention the cost of partying the visitors—and now a walkout threatened.

The only course was to rig a makeshift stand and place Robbins therein, which they did. The match began with a charge: that is, a race by one member of each team, starting from opposite ends of the field, to reach and gain control of the ball placed at the center of the field. Foxhall Keene was the choice to go it for the Americans, against Captain Little. Keene won the dash and, furthermore, with three beautifully deft strokes scored a goal in the stunning time of 24 seconds.

Applause, which costs nothing, arose from Dead Head Hill. An excited buzz came from the spectators around the field and, on the piazza, Mullaly's Orchestra struck up *Yankee Doodle*. The charge was omitted when play was resumed, and within 45 seconds Captain Little tied the score for the British. Again Dead Head Hill applauded in a nonpartisan spirit, and this time the band played *God Save the Queen*.

In the next period the British began to get organized as a team and Watson, as an individual, played superbly. In one skirmish he broke his mallet, but, as a reporter put it, "electrified the spectators by making a brilliant stroke with the broken stick." For all that, the next goal went to the Americans, made by Thomas Hitchcock. And one minute after that Keene scored and made it 3–1, Americans. The audience was thrilled at this completely unexpected development. It lasted only a moment, however.

Two goals down, the Englishmen simply got cracking. "They began to show some of their magnificent team play," one account noted. "In this they far surpassed the Americans, who played well individually but with little passing or teamwork." The same reporter mentioned, almost parenthetically, that the British began to get in "some sly work in heading off and obstructing their opponents." By early in the second of the three periods of 20 minutes each, the British tied the score on a goal by John Watson, and then Watson made it 4–3. The final score was 10–4 in favor of the British.

Saturday's crowd at Izzard's Field far surpassed that of Wednesday's, with carriages four deep and twice as numerous this time. Dead Head Hill was more crowded and more responsive than previously. At game time a light fog hung on the field and, as play progressed, became more dense, until at the end it interfered with both view and comfort and caused many to leave before the finish.

There was really not much to stay around for, from the American standpoint. As in the first match, Foxhall Keene and Captain Little staged the opening charge and, as before, Keene was first to the ball and even propelled it downfield with two fine strokes. But there he encountered the ubiquitous John Watson, who took it from him and started proceedings that led to a goal for the British, scored by Captain Lawley. The same man scored the second, and the British ran off two more before Keene, whose play was adjudged the strongest and most effective throughout for the American side, managed to drive one home.

From that point, however, it was a rout, as the English ran the score to 10–1 and finally 14–2. Nonetheless, there were two satisfactions for the Americans, small but telling. For one, they managed to hold the British scoreless for the last 17 minutes and 17 seconds of the match. For the other, they as a team, and Keene as an individual assigned to guard him, were able to contain John Watson and, in the doing, stir him to a monumental pique.

The Westchesterites adopted what might be termed their "get-Watson" policy about the time the score had reached 10–1, and something different was demanded of the Americans, obviously. Mainly, they zeroed in on Watson, and Keene was assigned the task of staying with him and badgering his every move. This irritated and then infuriated Watson to the point that, as a reporter put it, "he lost his temper and lost friends, as well."

Watson had been building toward both, it must be said, since the beginnings of the first match. His complaint about Referee Robbins' place on the field raised many an eyebrow and his method of directing his own team's operations caused much comment.

"Big John Watson, their captain, directed and encouraged his men, not always in Sunday school superintendent language," reported James Gordon Bennett's paper, the New York *Herald*. Another paper described Watson's harangues to his teammates as being delivered "in language more forcible than elegant when they fail to get advantage of their opponents, and they seemed afraid of him."

At any rate, during the latter stages of the Saturday match, with Keene guarding him unremittingly, Watson blew up, stopped the game and excitedly claimed a foul on Keene. This struck the audience as gauche, since the Hurlingham group was leading 11–2 at the time and the $1,000 Westchester Cup was virtually theirs for the packing. Watson's claim was taken to the referee for a ruling. The claim was disallowed.

The British players did not linger overly long at Newport, but they did take part in one final social and financial coup. They put up at auction their ponies, complete with saddles, bridles and, in a few cases, even blankets. The sale took place at a Newport stable and, as with everything else connected with the Hurlingham visit, it was a social triumph. Carriages lined the street in the vicinity of the auction site, and everyone who was anyone was in attendance, including all members of the English team except Captain Hone. John Watson was most prominently in evidence, sitting hard by the auctioneer during almost every minute of the doings. Eleven of the 15 ponies were purchased, with miscellaneous equipment, and the lot was knocked down for $5,476, not including one horse taken off the list and later sold at a private sale on private terms to August Belmont Jr.

A few days afterward the British started for home, with a sightseeing visit scheduled for Saratoga before sailing, and with much that must have pleased them. They had had themselves a time, their home-going expenses were previously covered. They had fresh money in pocket and the $1,000 cup in hand. In all ways they had carried the day. **END**

FOR THE RECORD

A roundup of the sports information of the week

BASKETBALL—The American Basketball Association continued its raids on the NBA, picking off DAVE BING and four referees, and signing LUCIOUS JACKSON (*page 30*) Bing, the NBA's leading scorer two years ago, will join the Washington Caps in 1971-72, but Jackson later decided his NBA contract was still valid and agreed to a new three-year deal with Philadelphia

BOATING—The Royal Canadian Yacht Club's MANITOU successfully defended the Canada's Cup on Lake Ontario by winning three consecutive races in its series with the U S challenger, *Niagara*, of the Cleveland Yacht Club

COLLEGE FOOTBALL—College football's centennial season got off to a flying start in Dallas as AIR FORCE ran up a 23-0 halftime lead over Southern Methodist and then withstood a second-half passing onslaught by the Mustangs' Chuck Hixson to win 26-22 (*page 101*) Things were no calmer at North Carolina State, where soph Quarterback Larry Russell of WAKE FOREST directed his team to a touchdown with five seconds left and then passed for two points and a 22-21 upset victory for first-year Coach Cal Stoll UCLA's JC-transfer quarterback, Dennis Dummit, threw a 60-yard TD pass on the game's fourth play, and the Bruins proceeded to stomp Oregon State 37-0

FOOTBALL—AFL While the NFL tuned up in its final exhibition games, the AFL opened its 10th regular season and its champion team beat a jinx The NEW YORK Jets defeated scrappy Buffalo 33-19 their first victory in War Memorial Stadium since they changed their name from the Titans The Bills rallied from a 19-3 deficit to tie the game 19-19 as rookies Bill Enyart and O J Simpson scored touchdowns, but Matt Snell went over from 11 yards out and Paul Crane intercepted a Jack Kemp pass and returned it 23 yards for a TD to clinch the victory Broadway Joe Namath had a less than mediocre day (seven completions in 19 attempts, three interceptions) Quarterback Greg Cook led CINCINNATI to a 27-21 win over Miami, throwing a pair of early touchdown passes to Eric Crabtree A spectacular 105-yard kickoff return by Miami rookie Eugene (Mercury) Morris did not prevent Bengals Coach Paul Brown from enjoying his 300th victory in 35 years Second-round draft choice Jerry Levias of Houston scared OAKLAND with a 15-yard touchdown catch that momentarily gave the Oilers a 17-14 lead late in the fourth quarter But the Raiders went ahead to stay 21-17 when Quarterback Daryle Lamonica hit Warren Wells on a 64-yard touchdown pass play Levias still could have pulled the game out if he had not dropped a long pass in the closing minutes KANSAS CITY carried its winning habit into the regular season with a 27-9 win at San Diego Wide Receiver Otis Taylor caught two TD passes from Len Dawson, Charger Quarterback John Hadl threw four interceptions and fumbled once DENVER Quarterback Steve Tensi had his most enjoyable day as a pro, throwing three touchdown passes as the Broncos breezed by Boston 35-7

NFL Meanwhile, back in the older league, ST LOUIS Quarterback Charley Johnson threw three scoring passes and substitute Jim Hart threw a fourth as the Cardinals edged Chicago 37-31 Gale Sayers had a 70-yard run from scrimmage for the Bears DETROIT's defense held New Orleans to eight first downs while the youthful Lion offense rolled up 21 of its own and routed the Saints 42-7 PITTSBURGH gave the New York Giants their fifth straight defeat 17-13 before 8,000 shivering fans in Montreal GREEN BAY beat Atlanta 38-24 as Bart Starr clicked on 15 of 18 passes and Travis Williams scored twice MINNESOTA defeated Cleveland 23-16 when Joe Kapp and Bill Brown broke the game's third tie with a 70-yard pass play LOS ANGELES with Clancy Williams starting the scoring on an 86-yard interception return, built up a big lead and almost blew it before beating San Francisco 31-28 PHILADELPHIA scored 12 points in the third quarter on a touchdown, conversion, field goal and safety to beat Washington 26-17 Former Heisman Trophy winner Roger Staubach of Dallas drew most of the applause for his exciting scrambles, but BALTIMORE picked off four of his passes and won 23-7

HARNESS RACING—Hambletonian winner LINDY'S PRIDE ($2.80) scored a 1¾-length victory over The Prophet at Liberty Bell Park in the $101,670 Colonial Trot, Pennsylvania's richest horse race

TRACK & FIELD—Kenya's KIPCHOGE KEINO ran the second-fastest 1,500 meters of the year (3:37.3) at the Indian Summer Games at South Lake Tahoe, Calif His time was the equivalent of a 3:54.3 mile LEE EVANS missed a world record by .2 with a 44.9 in the 440 JOHN CARLOS equaled the world mark in the 100-meter dash (9.9) but he was aided by a 7.1-mph wind, and so the record will be disallowed BOB SEAGREN and DICK RAITSBACK vaulted 17' 8¾", but both missed at 18' It was the first time two men had gone so high in one meet

MILEPOSTS—HIRED To replace the much-criticized Allie Sherman as head coach of the New York Giants, ALEX WEBSTER, former Giant fullback who was one of Allie's assistants Sherman, a onetime lefty quarterback for Brooklyn College and the Philadelphia Eagles, was NFL Coach of the Year twice, and his teams won three Eastern Division titles His eight-year record was 57-51-4

HIRED To replace retired Coach Bill Russell of the Boston Celtics, TOMMY HEINSOHN, former Holy Cross All-America and Celtic forward for nine years

UNRETIRED GEORGE SEALS, Chicago Bear offensive guard, after settling a contract dispute with Owner George Halas that had caused him to quit pro football However, the one-month holdout cost Seals $7,400 in fines

RETIRED Flanker BOBBY MITCHELL, 34, of the Washington Redskins, to a front-office personnel job Mitchell was an All-America running back at Illinois before joining Jimmy Brown in Cleveland's Mr Outside-Mr Inside backfield. He was traded to the Redskins in 1961 and promptly led the NFL in pass receiving In his 11-year career as a pro, Mitchell accounted for almost exactly eight miles (14,078 yards) rushing, catching passes and returning kicks, second only to Brown in league history, and also ranks second to Ray Berry of Baltimore with 521 pass receptions for 7,954 yards.

DIED HELEN SOBEL SMITH, 59, who as Helen Sobel played the best bridge of any woman in the world for 35 years and was Charles Goren's favorite partner, of cancer, in Detroit (*page 96*)

DIED HEC KILREA, 61 member of the 1936 and 1937 Stanley Cup-winning Detroit Red Wings He played in the National Hockey League from 1927 through 1939 with Ottawa, Toronto and Detroit A naturalized American, he won the Distinguished Service Cross and Croix de Guerre in World War II

DIED FRANK BUNCOM, 29, Cincinnati Bengal linebacker, of a heart attack in his hotel room Sunday morning before the team's regular-season home opener Buncom, a former USC tackle and San Diego's sixth-round draft choice in 1961, was All-AFL for the Chargers in 1967 and was drafted by Cincy in 1968 He left a wife and son

DIED JOHN BENINGTON, 47, basketball coach at Michigan State and father of nine children, from his second heart attack in five months, in the coaches' locker room in MSU's Jenison Gymnasium Beaington played football and basketball at the University of San Francisco and was captain of the 1949 USF basketball team that won the National Invitation Tournament He began his career as a head coach at Drake in 1956 and later moved to St Louis, where his Billikens earned five NIT berths and a 118-71 record His record at Michigan State was 56-38, and the Spartans tied for the Big Ten title in 1967

CREDITS

27—Gerry Cranham 28—Herb Scharfman 29—Heinz Kluetmeier, Herb Scharfman 30—right, Heinz Kluetmeier 31—Wayne Wilson from Textron Athletic, Tony Triolo; 72—Neil Leifer 84—top, PIP Photo 86—Jim Raftery—Turlotos 101—Walter Iooss Jr 127—Dave Pond—City of San Diego, Irsbath Miner 128—UPI

FACES IN THE CROWD

KARL KINSEL, 12, of Cotulla, Texas, won the Youth Rodeo Association steer-riding championship in Laredo and also clinched the state junior ribbon in calf roping The 4' 11", 82-pounder, a rodeo performer three years, practices by roping nine calves a day.

MIKE BERNARD, who will attend Southern Illinois University this fall, had a summer-long fight with pneumonia and couldn't practice high jumping But in the National Junior Olympics in San Diego he won by clearing 6' 8", his career best

ELIZA PANOE, of Palo Alto Calif, received the first Maureen Connolly Brinker Award as the outstanding junior girl tennis player in the U S She won the National Girls', Women's Hardcourt and National Girls' Hardcourt championships

JONATHAN LECRONE, a sophomore at Butler High, Vandalia, Ohio, hit .635 in a summer baseball league after a frosh year of starting at quarterback in football, leading the basketball team in scoring, averaging 84 in varsity golf and earning a B average.

MANTON SCOTT, of the Noroton (Conn) Yacht Club, skippered the winning crew through the eight-race Junior North American Sailing championship in Jacksonville. A previous winner of the Sears Cup, he is the first Noroton member to win both in 11 years.

RANDY BLUM, an honor student at the University of Northern Iowa, is approaching baseball from a different angle than most young men A former player, Randy has umpired since he was 15 and has officiated at three consecutive Little League World Series.

BASEBALL'S WEEK

by PETER CARRY

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Baltimore (7-0) players broke the champagne out of the cooler before their game last Saturday, but management, crying "Too early," put the stopper on any cork popping until after the Orioles had won 10–5 that night for their seventh consecutive victory. In truth, the would-be celebrants were a bit late. A Detroit (3-4) loss in an afternoon game had already clinched the Eastern Division pennant for the Orioles. Rarely has a team won the flag so early or so resoundingly. Leading by 18½ games now, they have been in first place since April 16 and have led by 10 games or more since late June. With the majors' best pitching (2.86 staff ERA) and the league's highest scoring offense, the Orioles are within range of breaking the record for most victories in a season (111) set by the 1954 Indians. Even with regular-season championships in all three major professional team sports this year, Baltimore fans still have a score to settle. The football Colts and basketball Bullets were both knocked off in postseason play by underdog New York teams. With the Mets now a possible World Series opponent, the Orioles may have an opportunity to break that jinx. Washington (4-3) looked ready to clinch fourth place and its first over-.500 season since 1952. Manager Ted Williams predictably has improved the Senators' hitting, which is up 30 points this year, but he has also shown a deft touch with his pitchers, particularly Casey Cox. Cox, winless in 1968, last week picked up his 12th victory in 17 decisions. Boston's (4-4) Rico Petrocelli hit three home runs to bring his season's total to 38, one short of Vern Stephens' league record for shortstops. Bobby Murcer, who was heralded this spring in New York (3-5) as the next Mickey Mantle, has broken out of a long, midsummer slump to hit nine homers in the past three weeks. Murcer's four clouts last week gave him 26 for the year, three more than Mantle hit in his first season. As Cleveland (1-6) slumped more than 40 games from first, one Indian player said, "This is a team without pride. All pride was lost before May 1, and everybody quit way back then. Everybody waited for something to happen to pick us up, but nobody went out and broke his back trying to lift up the team himself." The Western Division's expansion teams, Seattle (5-3) and Kansas City (5-2), were driving to finish ahead of two older clubs, Chicago (4-4) and California (4-4). The Pilots moved to within 1½ games of fifth place on tightly pitched wins by veterans Steve Barber and George Brunet and a complete-game victory by 20-year-old Miguel Fuentes. With a big boost from Wally Bunker, the Royals moved within 2½ games of third place. Bunker, who won 19 games for the Orioles in 1964 before injuring his arm, threw a one-hitter. "I'm a much better pitcher than I was in '64," he said. "I had only two pitches then, a fastball and a sinker. Now I've developed a curve, and my control is sharper." Tommy John and Wilbur Wood combined for a 3-2 victory, and then Joel Horlen threw a three-hit shutout to give the White Sox two of their four wins. Andy Messersmith continued to star even as the Angels slumped. The 24-year-old righthander, who began the season with five straight losses, pitched two complete-game wins to increase his record to 15-9. Minnesota (2-5), leading by eight games and virtually certain of a division title, received good news for the playoffs as Dean Chance, who missed most of the season because of an injury, pitched his first complete game of the year, allowing only one run. The Twins' other high-priced starter, Jim Kaat, who has also been ailing, showed strong form for the second straight time in relief. In his latest appearance the $55,000-a-year lefthander pitched five innings, allowing one run and earning only his second win over the last six weeks. Oakland's (3-5) Reggie Jackson, knocked from sole possession of the league home-run lead by the Senators' Frank Howard, was then bumped out of the lineup with a case of the hives.

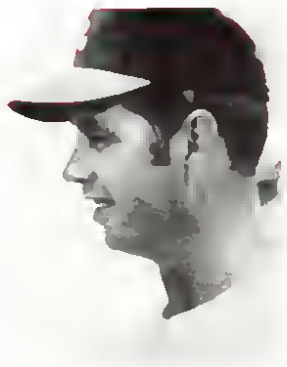
Standings—East: Balt 102-45, Det 83-63, Bos 78-67, Wash 76-71, NY 72-74, Clev 57-90. West: Minn 87-58, Oak 79-66, Cal 63-81, KC 61-84, Chi 58-86, Sea 57-88.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Hoyt Wilhelm (*below*) and Phil Niekro were not the only Braves starring as Atlanta (6-1) moved to the top of the Western Division. Henry Aaron hit two home runs, one of them the 550th of his career, and did an about-face from his talk of retirement earlier this season. "I've never admitted this before," said Aaron, "but I'd like to go for Babe Ruth's home-run record." According to Aaron, one person who might prevent him from staying with the Braves for the four or five years he figures it would take him to catch Ruth is Brave announcer Milo Hamilton. Aaron and Hamilton have had a running feud for two years, and Henry said last week, "I want them to get that man off my back before I sign for next year." While the fans took sides—old lady radio listeners rooting for Hamilton

HIGHLIGHT

It was about time. After 19 seasons and a record 985 appearances, 46-year-old knuckleball Pitcher Hoyt Wilhelm packed his bags in California last week and headed home to Georgia. After all, Wilhelm is a year over the beginning pension age under the players' new retirement plan and he deserves to spend his declining years with his family. The trouble from the opposition's standpoint—is that Wilhelm does not seem to understand about retirements or declines. Traded to the Braves in a waiver deal with the Angels, he arrived in Atlanta just in time to relieve the Braves' only other reliable reliever, Cecil Upshaw, who was dead tired after 55 appearances this season. Wilhelm quickly scored a pair of saves in his first two games with his new team and put Atlanta back into first place in the National League's tight Western Division. The addition of Wilhelm not only makes the Braves a tougher team to beat down the stretch, but it also gives the team the best one-two knuckleball combination in baseball. Atlanta's No. 1 knuckleballer, of course, is Phil Niekro, who won his 20th game last week. This is heady stuff for almost everybody in Atlanta except 20-year-old rookie Catcher Bob Didier. Didier has had remarkable success lunging for Niekro's knuckler this season, but Wilhelm is a whole new problem for him. "Catching Hoyt may be tougher," he says. "I've detected a pattern with Phil's knuckleball. It usually breaks down. But Hoyt's jumps a lot of different ways." Wilhelm, who throws his floater almost effortlessly, claims he will not retire for another year or two. By then, unless he has discovered a pattern in Wilhelm's losses, too, Didier may be thinking of his own retirement.



WILHELM: FLOATING HOME

while other fans carried banners saying, TRADE MILO—KEEP HANK, the Braves' front office called in the unfriendly pair and settled their differences. "It would be a shame for Aaron to quit because of me," said Hamilton. "If his arm doesn't fall off, the Reds can win the World Series," said one reporter of Cincinnati's (4-4) Reliever Wayne Granger. Granger, who has appeared in 79 games this season, pitched seven times last week and figured in all the Reds' wins, as they remained within two games of first place. Los Angeles (5-2) broke a four-game losing streak with some help from Mickey Mouse. In a pregame meeting before the victory that broke the slump, Manager Walter Alston pulled out a windup, laughing MM that had been sent in by a fan. "Laugh with Mickey and relax," said Alston, and his team went out to beat the Braves 4–0 behind Bill Singer. Houston (3-4) moved within two games of first with three consecutive wins but then slumped back to 5½ games out with four straight losses. Two of the defeats were heartbreakers for Astro pitchers. Don Wilson lost a five-hitter 1–0, and then Larry Dierker pitched 8⅔ innings of perfect ball, but his team lost 3–2 in the 13th. San Francisco (3-5) sagged from first to third, but Manager Clyde King was not discouraged. He plans to win the pennant during the Giants' six games in 11 days against last-place San Diego (1-6) at the end of the season. "If we can stay within a game of the top going into the last week, our chances are good," said King. While shocking New York (8-1) ran its winning streak to 10 games and shocked Chicago (1-6) fell from the lead to 3½ games behind in the Eastern Division (*page 28*), Pittsburgh (3-6) and St. Louis (6-2) were all but bounced out of the pennant race. The Cards returned to third place but failed to gain ground on the leaders despite strong pitching by starters Chuck Taylor, Nelson Briles and Bob Gibson and Reliever Mudcat Grant, who earned two saves and a victory in four games. The usually high-scoring Pirates, who began the week in position to threaten for the lead, fell 10 games behind when they batted only 196 for the week, nearly 100 points less than their season's average. Tail-enders Montreal (4-4) and Philadelphia (2-5) each took a hand in the pennant race. The Expos defeated the Pirates 4–2 behind Met castoff Steve Renko's five-hitter. Recalling their own September collapse in 1964, the Phillies took obvious pleasure in turning the tables on the Cubs. After knocking off Chicago in two games, the Phils' John Briggs said, "I can remember the 1964 season when everybody was knocking us around. I say the hell with the Cubs. I don't think they felt sorry for us then."

Standings—East: NY 88-58, Chi 85-62, StL 79-67, Pitt 77-67, Phil 57-87, Mont 47-100. West: Atl 82-65, LA 79-65, SF 80-88, Cin 78-65, Hou 75-69, SD 45-101.

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19TH HOLE THE READERS TAKE OVER

UNBALANCED SCALE

Sirs:

Thank you for calling attention to the plight of Gary Freeman, Oregon State University basketball player (SCORECARD, Sept. 15). Freeman hoped to play professional basketball and then to coach high school teams. He represents that segment of college students who do not take disruptive action, are studious and plan to take their responsible places in society. His future is jeopardized by the NCAA action. The irony is that he was aware of the strict NCAA rules and thought that he had complied with them. Who would blame him if he feels that the "system" has not treated him fairly?

As your editorial indicates, the thrust of the NCAA rule might be valid: protecting college basketball players from gamblers and long off-season schedules. But who can assert that a lettermen-club-benefit high school game, such as the one in question, should be within the purview of such a rule?

I am concerned about the Freeman issue, and I hope that the NCAA will see the true perspective: a college athlete and his future, as well as the faith in the NCAA by all athletes, must be paramount.

The NCAA council meets in October. It will have an opportunity to rectify this injustice. The old adage, "to err is human ," deserves a new ending: "To rectify is fair."

MARK O. HATFIELD
U.S. Senate
Washington

ON THE LINE (CONT.)

Sirs:

My letter concerns some remarks made by Dee Andros in Part I of your article *The Desperate Coach* (Aug. 25 *et seq.*). I am that "son of an Air Force colonel" he was so appalled by. I feel that quite a bit of the story related to you by Mr. Andros needs to be put in proper perspective.

I had talked with Rich Brooks, one of Mr. Andros' assistants, the week before spring break and told him that I was not going to return in the fall and therefore could see no reason to go out for spring practice. I didn't feel I could play football for Oregon State because of conflicting beliefs between myself and the coaching staff concerning the importance of individuality and self-identity.

I did not see or talk with any of the coaching staff again until registration day for spring term. At OSU an athlete's fees are paid with a credit card that is enclosed in his registration packet. My credit card was not enclosed and neither was that of another athlete who quit at the same time. We decided to go see what had happened.

We talked to Mr. Brooks, who said he had thought we both "weren't coming back spring term" and had taken our names off the scholarship list. I didn't believe this because I had made a point of telling him and Mr. Andros that I was finishing the year at OSU. At that point Mr. Brooks became angry and said that "we couldn't really expect to keep our scholarships if we weren't going to play football in the spring."

Mr. Andros was even less professional than Mr. Brooks. He told us that we couldn't "expect something for nothing" and that he reviewed each athlete's scholarship every quarter and could "cut any scholarship at random." Jim Barratt, the athletic director, was no more helpful than the coaches, although he did promise to "see what the situation was" and told us to come back the next day.

I spent the rest of the day trying to enlist the help of several deans and a legal advisor. The school legal advisor was "out of town" and a phone call to the athletic department office by a trembling dean got no results. A person just doesn't get in the way of the athletic department at OSU if he can help it.

The next day I called an English professor who supported the boycott to see if he could get me any legal assistance. He called a lawyer who in turn called the athletic department and discussed the legality of its actions. At 1 o'clock we went to see Jim Barratt, and he had our scholarships back for us with apologies for the "mistake that had been made and it was too bad that we weren't satisfied with OSU, good luck, and it was too bad that we didn't live up to our part of the deal the way the athletic department did."

It is my belief that Dee Andros expected us to leave OSU before the end of the week, not being able to pay the out-of-state tuition and fees on such short notice. If we had left, he would have saved the athletic department about $1,000 and remained a solid pillar in the college community.

I did have a beard and my hair hadn't been cut recently when I talked to Mr. Andros about my scholarship. It was, however, barely hanging over my ears and a three-week beard could hardly be considered "long." Actually, it looked more like dirt than hair. I wasn't wearing sandals but desert boots (with socks), blue jeans, a button-down-collar shirt and a golf jacket. Hardly hippie attire.

Give Mr. Andros 80 Jack Armstrongs and he would be in heaven. Give him an individual who looks like Jack Armstrong but who is secretly Greg Stanley, and he is "appalled and sick to his stomach." I do not believe that four years of college and a chance to be part of "big-time football" is worth giving up my personal identity and self-respect. Mr. Andros demands this.

I learned in one year as an OSU football player what most people who watch and love college football never know: that each player is a piece of property. When that property is considered no longer desirable it is dumped as quickly and at the lowest cost to the owner as possible. Football is big business, operating on a profit-loss basis. Human feelings cannot be allowed to gum up the works of that beautifully efficient machine. If they were, how could a coach ever make a name for himself?

GREG STANLEY
Ex Football Player

Chico, Calif.

Sirs:

Andros is tough but fair. He dictates on the field, but his players have free rein off the field. As responsible young men, very few abuse this freedom. And Andros' repeated winning seasons reflect this. Andros bends with the changes in society but does not yield. The word which coincides with success is moderation.

MICHAEL L. MCDONALD

Springfield, Vt.

Sirs:

Success is the offspring of discipline. There is not a successful man anywhere, be he a doctor, lawyer, businessman or professional athlete, who is not well disciplined.

It would be a grave mistake to take away any coach's power to discipline, be it at the junior high, high school or college level. Our nation needs disciplined people now more than ever. It is obvious that most of our young people are growing up without it. At least our athletes can learn to develop discipline. Let's continue to give them the opportunity. We can't afford not to.

J. BARRY HART

Houston

FOOT FAULT

Sirs:

The following observations concern articles in your Sept. 1 issue. In an article about Owen Williams (*Living Dangerously at Forest Hills*), Kim Chapin says that Williams decided he was never going to be a winner because Jack Kramer told him his size-12 feet, among other things, would prohibit that. Then, in the article on Stan Smith (*Davis Cup? Get Stan Smith to Take Care of that Chore*), Budd Collins quotes Smith as saying: "It took me a while to learn how to manage my size-13 feet." Since author Collins feels that Smith is our No. 1

continued

Why throw away a sure thing?
by SONNY JURGENSEN
Quarterback, Washington Redskins
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player, I can only conclude that Kramer, who is one of the greatest players of all time, is no judge of feet.

FREDERIC M HADLEY

Indianapolis

Sirs:

U.S. Open Tournament Director Owen Williams was perhaps too hasty in heeding Jack Kramer's warning that his size-12 feet would keep him from being a winner. Look where Stan Smith's size 13s got him!

THOMAS HOOKER JR.

Austin, Texas

BUGGED

Sirs:

I liked your article on the Weyerhaeusers (*Shy Owner of 1,640th of the U.S.*, Aug. 18). This truly is a story of a great American family.

I believe you owe an apology to the South, however. In discussing campsites, you refer to the South as a place "where ticks, snakes, red bugs and other discouragements prevent such developments and camping is rare." Please send your reporter down here, I'll show him plenty of camps. The truth of the matter is that we have so much free, beautiful campground no one has to give us any.

FRANK HESTER

Bessemer, Ala.

ANOTHER VOTE FOR CATHERINE

Sirs:

My letter is in defense of Catherine Lacoste (*A Super Keen-o Show by La Grande Catherine*, Aug. 25). This young lady has proved to the world what she can do on a golf course. The attitude of the lady golfers in this country toward her is incredible to say the least!

You mention the incident during the 1967 Open when mouths of certain U.S. lady pros fell open after Catherine asked if anyone was interested in playing a practice round. How in the world was she supposed to know they *expected* to be looked upon as something a little superior?

Now that Catherine has won the U.S. Amateur, let's hope the U.S. feeling of superiority disappears. If not, our lady golfers are only fooling themselves—no one else. We have many fine lady golfers in this country, but if Miss Lacoste were on the ladies' pro tour, it is a pretty safe bet she would be one of the top players.

Out this way we were all pulling for Shelley Hamlin, whom we knew to be a top-notch golfer. But anyway, hats off to Miss Lacoste!

RAY SODERSTEN

Visalia, Calif.

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